DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 388 476 RC 020 304

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|---|---|
| TITLE | Country Stars: Promising Practices for Rural At-Risk Students. |
| INSTITUTION | Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC. |
| PUB DATE | 93 |
| CONTRACT | RP91002003 |
| NOTE | 270p. |
| PUB TYPE | Reference Materials - Directories/Catalogs (132) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC11 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Dropout Prevention; Dropout Programs; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Practices; Educational Resources; Elementary Secondary Education; *High Risk Students; Intervention; *Organizations (Groups); Parent Education; Periodicals; Potential Dropouts; Program Descriptions; *Remedial Programs; *Rural Education; Rural Schools; School Community Relationship |
| IDENTIFIERS | Arkansas; Louisiana; New Mexico; Oklahoma; Texas |

ABSTRACT

This directory describes programs for serving at-risk students in rural small schools in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Section 1 lists 72 programs by state, including 8 programs that were added to the directory in 1995. Each entry includes target population; a brief description of program features; the school/community context; program costs, sources of funding, and other implementation specifics; and contact information. Interventions target various populations, including pregnant teenagers, students with disciplinary problems, low-achieving students, young children, parents, dropouts, economically disadvantaged youth, academically gifted students, and rural students. Section 2 lists organizations and other resources associated with rural small school improvement, including national and regional centers, consortia, councils, information clearinghouses, and technology-related networks. Also included are listings of rural journals and periodicals and state-specific organizations that focus on rural issues and education. Section 3 contains definitions used to identify at-risk and dropout students in the five states. The most commonly cited definition of a dropout is a student who leaves school for any reason, except death or transfer to another school, without graduating or completing a program of studies. Criteria for identifying at-risk students include student characteristics, school factors, and attitude and performance indicators. (LP)

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ED 388 476

# Country Stars:

# Promising Practices for Rural At-Risk Students

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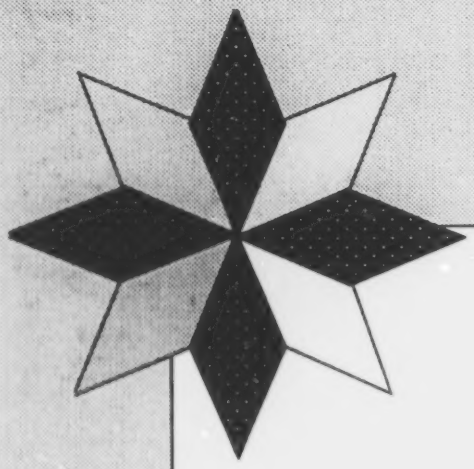

# Country Stars:

# Promising Practices for Rural At-Risk Students

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Southwest Educational
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## Organization of the Directory

The directory is organized into the following sections.

**Section 1 – Promising Practices.** Promising practices are listed by state. The description for each of the practices addresses the school/community context, how the program is implemented, and program costs and sources of funding. In addition, contact information is provided.

**Section 2 – Organizations and Other Resources Associated with Rural, Small School Improvement.** This section contains contact information for agencies and organizations that may serve as a resource to rural educators. It also includes a list of rural journals and periodicals. The section will be expanded in subsequent directories, as more organizations are identified.

**Section 3 – State Definitions in the Southwestern Region: At-Risk Students and School Dropouts.** This section includes the state definitions being used to identify at-risk and dropout students in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

## SEDL Needs Your Help

Rural, small schools in the southwestern region have a wide variety of promising practices and programs that are serving at-risk youth. The RSSI will continue to identify such programs, and requests readers to contact the RSSI to nominate additional programs for future resource directories.

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Rural, Small Schools Initiative
211 East 7th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
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## *Country Stars: Promising Practices for Rural At-risk Students in the Southwestern Region*

### Introduction

In 1991, the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's Rural, Small Schools Initiative (RSSI) received funding to focus on rural, small school programs serving students who are at risk of failing in or dropping out of school. Based on previous school improvement experiences across the region, the RSSI's activities focus on disseminating helpful information to rural, small school educators and policy makers through publications, networks, conferences, and collaborative efforts.

The purpose of this resource directory is to describe promising practices for serving at-risk students in rural, small schools. Dissemination of the directory will encourage networking among rural educators and promote the success of rural, small schools, especially for at-risk students. This directory will be updated annually. In addition, the promising practices will be featured at annual conferences designed to promote networking among rural educators and policy makers.

The promising practices in this directory were identified by searching the professional literature on programs for at-risk youth and by contacting organizations and agencies serving each of the states in the southwestern region (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas). The criteria for identification as a promising practice included:

- The program serves at-risk students living in a predominantly rural area.
- The school district or agency is willing to serve as a resource to other rural, small schools interested in school improvement.
- The promising practice can be adopted or replicated by other rural schools with limited resources.
- The program was recommended by officials of a state education agency or organization.
- The program was identified in a publication or other recognition as a program serving rural at-risk students.

Due to the variability in the five states' definitions of at-risk students (see *State Definitions of At-risk Students* section), RSSI staff members used the individual programs' descriptions of their targeted at-risk students. With regard to district size, RSSI staff members focused on identifying promising practices that serve rural at-risk students in districts of 1500 or less students. However, some of the promising practices are in districts that exceed 1500 students, primarily those in Louisiana. Schools in Louisiana are organized in geographic and political areas called parishes that include both metropolitan and rural communities, and the parishes exceed 1500 students. In such instances, RSSI staff members considered individual school size or community characteristics rather than overall parish or district enrollment.

# SECTION 1

# PROMISING PRACTICES

## Teen Parent Program
## Alma High School
## Alma, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** Female students in High School who are pregnant or already have children.

### Community Description/School Context

Even though Alma has changed from a rural community to a bedroom suburb of the nearby town of Fort Smith in western Arkansas, many of its students are from rural areas. The community has approximately 3200 predominantly middle-class, White non-Hispanic residents. Approximately 2400 K-12 students attend school in Alma, which is a member of a consolidated school district that enrolls approximately 5500 students.

### Program Description

Before the Teen Parent Program was implemented, almost all teen-aged parents dropped out of school and did not graduate. School officials recognized that these students dropped out for two reasons: they did not have anyone to care for their children and they did not have access to support services to continue their education. Considered a grassroots effort, the Teen Parent Program was developed during 1991 and initiated at the beginning of the 1992 school year. This program emphasizes activities in the areas of child care for children of students, academic counseling and assistance, vocational education and counseling, and support. Fourteen students have already been served by this program. At the end of the first semester, eight of the young women were on the honor roll (B average). The highest GPA was 4.3, for a student who delivered her baby in October. (Through enrollment in honors' classes, it is possible for a student's GPA to be greater then 4.0). Only one GPA was under 2.0, and there were no failing grades. None of the enrolled students have dropped out of school.

Students are enrolled in the program as soon as school officials become aware of their pregnancy. High school counselors provide information on the Teen Parent Program and pre-natal education. Once enrolled, teenage mothers are expected to remain in the program until graduation.

The program provides subsidies for child care for all participating teenage mothers, regardless of income. The district has negotiated lower rates with one child care provider, but participants are free to choose from among all of the community's child care providers

if they pay the difference in the rates. Ensuring that the teenage mothers have access to adequate child care removes one obstacle to their school attendance.

A full-time paraprofessional works with pregnant and teenage mothers, providing academic tutoring, taking class assignments to the student while she is in the hospital, making home visits, and referring students to social services. The paraprofessional's primary role is to assist students with their academic regimen and ensure that they keep up with their assignments at all times.

The district uses existing guidance personnel to provide vocational education and counseling for the teenage mothers. The district feels that employment training is an essential part of their educational mission.

In order to provide a forum to share their difficulties and develop solutions to them, a support group has been established. The support group meets twice monthly and is run by the project's paraprofessional staff member. Since the inception of the program, this support group has been expanded to include several of the babies' fathers, at their request. Topics addressed have included nutrition, time management, money management, nontraditional careers, health careers, and CPR training. Representatives from community agencies are often invited to share information about their services at the meetings.

Because of a concern that students often glorify the idea of teenage motherhood, the school has increased the amount of time it spends on sex education and also emphasizes the difficulties of being a teenage mother.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

Funding for this program came from a one-year federal startup grant, the Carl Perkins Vocational Grant. This money ($25,000) is divided between the subsidized child care and the salary of the paraprofessional who administers the program. This grant is open-ended: if the project continues to succeed, the grant can run for many years. The program also is supported through general district funds.

**Program Contact**

David Woolly, Assistant Superintendent
Alma School District
P.O. Box 2359
Alma, AR 72921
501/632-4791

## Restructuring Through Rethinking
## County Line School District
## Branch, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** Students with disciplinary problems and low academic achievement, but all students benefit from the various program components

### Community Description/School Context

County Line is a rural school district with a K-12 population of about 575 students and a faculty of 42 teachers serving residents of Franklin and Logan counties in Arkansas. County Line is a consolidation of schools from the communities of Ratcliff, Branch, and Cecil. Both the high school and elementary school are located on the same site. The location of the schools is unique in that it is not in a community or town. Its location is a result of compromise by officials who organized the original consolidation of the area community schools.

The student population is almost one hundred percent White non-Hispanic. About forty percent of the students participate in the federal free and reduced lunch program. There is strong community support of the school system as is evidenced by parent volunteers and community involvement in school activities.

### Program Description

During the summer of 1989 the superintendent and several teachers worked to develop a framework for a program that would provide an environment in which teachers could feel free and confident enough to try new approaches to instruction. Based on the philosophy that individuals who are committed to change will find a way to make their new ideas work, a proposal for *Restructuring Through Rethinking* was submitted to the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation for funding. Elements included teacher training, retreats, and seed money for new projects.

Restructuring Through Rethinking was funded with an $83,000 three-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation and began during the 1989-90 school year. The foundation stipulated that *Math Their Way*, a software program not in the original proposal, be implemented in the school as a condition of funding the program.

From the beginning, this program concentrated its efforts on developing new attitudes among the district's educators so that they would become motivated and empowered to develop projects to address the needs of at-risk students. During 1991-1992, several projects were implemented, including the following projects that are focused on at-risk students:

- **After School Tutoring:** Provided by certified teachers for students in grades 4-12 who want extra help with their school work or whose teachers or parents perceive them as needing extra help with their work. After-school tutoring sessions are held for about an hour per day three days per week. Refreshments are provided because of the length added to the school day. The district also provides transportation for the 25 students currently enrolled. The participating students' grades have improved, and they have improved in turning in work on time.

- **Project Succeed:** This program is provided for ten to fifteen students in grades 7-12 who are at risk of dropping out due to behavioral or academic problems. It combines incentives for school attendance and achievement with tutoring assistance during study hall periods. The program is staffed by a paraprofessional who works with individual students to help meet academic and behavioral goals. More than a tutor, she functions as an at-school mother who monitors, encourages, and counsels students. The paraprofessional work closely with teachers to ensure that the students are achieving their goals. The students' grades have improved and teachers have noted positive changes in the students' self-esteem and attitudes.

- **Alternative Classroom:** A state-operated temporary placement youth shelter that serves a six-county area is located within the school district. County Line Public Schools has established an alternative school program for students staying in this facility. Since their stay in the juvenile facility is limited to 45 days, the students, ages eight to eighteen years, are only temporarily in the district. To ensure that these students do not fall behind their classes in their home districts, the Branch district coordinates a program to address their special problems. The district coordinates extensively with the students' home districts, including the use of their regular textbooks and materials. This classroom is also used to serve other students who are not succeeding in the regular classroom setting. The Alternative Classroom project is funded through Chapter 1.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

While Restructuring Through Rethinking includes a variety of projects, the goals are to better meet the needs of at-risk students. In fact, the primary goal is actually to strive for continual growth and school improvement.

The overall project to restructure the school and develop an atmosphere of creativity and challenge among the professional educators was funded through the Rockefeller Grant. The operational funding for specific projects has come from Chapter 1 sources.

Each year, during the grant period, the entire professional staff meets at a retreat during the summer for training and generating ideas and plans. In addition, teachers are encouraged to visit other districts and given release time for staff development. They hold team meetings six times per year on designated early release days.

**Program Contact**

Kay Johnson, Superintendent
County Line School District
Rt. 1, Box 105
Branch, AR 72928

501/635-2222

## Chapter 1 Basic Skills Lab Program
## Rogers Public Schools
## Rogers, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** Chapter 1 students with standardized test scores below 50% on either reading or mathematics in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades

### Community Description/School Context

Rogers is a moderate-sized city of 24,000 residents twenty miles from Fayetteville and the University of Arkansas. It is comprised mostly of White non-Hispanic, middle and upper class workers in light manufacturing and agricultural-related industries.

### Program Description

Rogers Public Schools with an enrollment of approximately 7500 students wanted a program to address the academic needs of their students who scored below 50% on standardized tests. Staff members designed a program that would be separate from the regular curriculum but would not require "pullouts" during regular instruction time. They also visited several schools outside the district before deciding on computerized instruction/software for use in their basic skills laboratories.

The Chapter 1 Basic Skills Lab program consists of labs at each of eight schools. The labs have a variety of activities to improve the reading skills of students. They combine computerized drill and instruction exercises using software from Josten's Learning Corporation, and students are assessed through both the software skills mastery printouts and state tests. Since the implementation of this program, 80% of all students are reading at or above, grade level. Leaders report a high degree of interest by students in learning on computers, especially due to the immediate feedback they receive for their work.

Students placed in the program work on computers either before school, during study hall, or after school (for 5th and 6th grade students). For those students remaining after school, the district provides transportation home.

The program is staffed by one paraprofessional for each lab and one teacher, who have been specifically trained in the application of the software and course materials. These educators work with individual students who practice drills four days per week and write on the fifth day. They publish books which are, in turn, used for reading by other students in the program.

In-class work is combined with homework. Parents are asked to directly support this program by reading to the children. Students receive awards for completing projects.

In 1989 this district's program was selected as one of four in the U.S. for recognition under the U.S. Secretary of Education's Initiative for Exemplary Programs for Compensatory Education. It was also selected for presentation at the International Reading Conference in Las Vegas during 1990.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The computer labs have been purchased over several years, with costs ranging from $20,000 to $75,000 for each lab. Funding for the purchase of the hardware and software was divided between U.S. Department of Education Chapter 1 funds and local funds. The ongoing cost of the program, including personnel, materials and software updates, is funded through the bulk of the $200,000 in Chapter 1 funds that the district receives each year. The additional busing is provided through district operations.

**Program Contact**

Beverly Prentice, Chapter 1 Supervisor
Rogers Public Schools
220 South Fifth
Rogers, AR 72759

501/631-3650

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## Programs for Delta Children and Families
## Arkansas State University
## State University, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** At-risk three and four year olds and their families

### Community Description/School Context

Arkansas State University is located in the heart of the lower Mississippi Delta. In a report by the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission, in *The Delta Initiatives: Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential,* "the people of the Delta are described as people who by statistics constitute the poorest region of the United States of America; where jobs are scarce and jobs skills training almost unknown; where infant mortality rates rival those in the third world; where dropping out of school and teenage pregnancy are commonplace; where capital for small farmers and small businesses is severely limited; where good housing and health care are unattainable for many; where industrial technology lags a decade behind and funds for research and development barely trickle to colleges and universities; where illiteracy reigns. It is for these people and their children that the Arkansas State University Programs for Children and Families in the Delta are planned."

### Program Description

The Arkansas State University *Programs for Delta Children and Families* is designed to accomplish several goals:

1. To establish quality three and four year old programs in school districts and communities where need and interest exists;
2. To reach into the community pulling together resources which can improve the quality of the lives of children and families participating;
3. To implement a unique parent education and literacy program geared toward meeting the specific needs of adults in the Delta;
4. To use Arkansas State University as a resource to the Delta region by the establishment of a model three and four year old program which can serve as a research, demonstration, and training center for early childhood programs.

In 1991, the program began at six sites, one in each of six communities in the Mississippi Delta region of Arkansas, offering full school-day programs on the school campuses. The curriculum of the program is based on National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC's) *Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8.* The sites are Parkin Public School System, West Memphis School District, Helena/West Helena School District, Arkansas

State University (Nettleton Public Schools), Hughes Public School District, and Tillar Public School District. These six sites serve a total of 160 children. Four of the sites provide services to 20 children in a one-classroom setting. The other two sites serve 40 children in two classrooms.

The criteria for student eligibility for the program includes:

1. Low income level of parents
2. Low parental educational level (non-high school graduate)
3. Low birth weight (less than 5.5 lbs.)
4. Teenage parent household (at time of child's birth)
5. Substance abuse/addition (of parents and/or child)
6. Physical abuse or neglect

A strong parent component utilizing a Family Resource Management and Literacy Plan includes:

1. A community volunteer program
2. A parent volunteer program
3. A parent education program including family resource management and adult literacy
4. The establishment of a Parent Advisory Council
5. Home visits
6. Parent conferences

A needs assessment of parents is conducted periodically, and programs are planned based on the survey results. Parents attend monthly meeting at the site that include parent training, books and books on tape, lists of activities for parents to do with their children, and guest speakers.

The children's progress is being monitored with pre-and post-testing using several assessment instruments including the Brigance, Battle, and DIAL-R. Staff are in the process of collecting data, and are noting increases in children's performance. Summary data is also being collected on the parent component.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The direct services to children component is funded by Arkansas Better Chance at $400,000 per year. The program received an additional $20,000 to fund travel and materials, stressing family literacy, for the parent component of the program.

**Sources of funding**

- Arkansas Better Chance
- Southern Governor's Association Grant

**Staffing and staff development**

Teacher/child ratio 1:10 (2 adults per classroom)

- Program Manager per site who also serves as a Lead Teacher (MSE Early Childhood Education completed by 1995)
- Teachers (BSE/MSE Early Childhood Education completed by 1995)
- Professional Assistant/Aide (AA Early Childhood Education)

Program Managers/Teachers receive a minimum of 10 in-service days per year. Professional Assistants receive a minimum of 5 in-service days per year. All program staff are in the process of working toward NAEYC accreditation.

**Program Contact**

Dr. Beverly Boals
Arkansas State University
P.O. Box 940
State University, AR 72467

501/972-3059

## Cotton Plant-Maple Leaf Project
## Cotton Plant High School
## Cotton Plant, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** High school students and community

**Community Description/School Context**

Cotton Plant is a community located 75 miles from Little Rock, Arkansas, and 79 miles from Memphis, Tennessee. The population of Cotton Plant is 1,262, with 330 students attending school (130 at Cotton Plant High School). The population is 89 percent Black, 11 percent White non-Hispanic, and 92 percent low income (96 percent of students receive free/reduced lunch).

In the community there is little active support for the school. Active participation in PTA is minimal and few parent/adult volunteers are active in school programs.

**Program Description**

It was recognized that the school and community were experiencing declining enrollment and population. In order for both to survive, they needed to join efforts to improve relations. In February, 1993, an advisory committee for the Cotton Plant-Maple Leaf Project was formed comprised of representatives from the school board, administration, faculty, students, and community members.

The goals for the Cotton Plant-Maple Leaf Project are:

1. To provide for the City of Cotton Plant a capstone beautification project that is directly related to the instruction provided in various programs of the Cotton Plant High School;
2. To extend the learning from the classroom to the community setting where real application may be made;
3. To provide students with real experience in community service projects and develop an awareness of the need for and benefits of community service;
4. To involve out-of-school citizens from the community in the cooperative educational efforts of the School District's academic programs.

Seven phases of the project have been planned with local community volunteers involved in every step. Phase I will improve the facial appearance of the downtown stores by using awnings. There will be an instructional seminar provided by the Maple Leaf Canvas company (hence the project name) followed by a field trip to their factory in Little

Rock to observe construction of awnings. Art classes will develop designs and color schemes, home economics classes will sew the canvas, agriculture classes will measure and construct the frames, and all classes and volunteers will install the awnings. The other six phases are: repair of sidewalks, installation of planters, improvement of the city park, paint and redecorate store fronts, participation of local civic groups and/or churches in adopt-a-block (an ongoing litter clean-up project), and finally, publicizing, celebrating, and reporting on the project's progress.

Participants are recruited from the classes of the various academic programs involved and community participants are recruited by bulletins and posters placed throughout the community. Exemplary service will be recognized and awarded by certificates and public recognition at a function concluding the project.

It is expected that the local civic groups will replicate and expand the project. Students and other participants involved are expected to take a personal interest in the continued upkeep of the project area.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

A $10,000 grant from the Arkansas Alternative Education Grant funds cost for the awnings from Maple Leaf Canvas.

**Sources of funding**

- Arkansas Alternative Education Grant

**Staffing and staff development**

An orientation assembly included information on volunteerism. Maple Leaf Canvas worked with staff to provide technical assistance and information related to awnings. Also, each teacher will present technical training for volunteers at various stages throughout the project.

**Program Contact**

Randall James, Superintendent
Cotton Plant School District
P.O. Drawer 40
Cotton Plant, AR 72036

501/459-2081

## Play School Day Care Center, Inc.
## Weiner Public Schools
## Weiner, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** At-risk children ages birth-5
After school care for ages 6-12

### Community Description/School Context

With a population of 650, the predominantly White non-Hispanic community of Weiner is located in northeast Arkansas, 18 miles south of Jonesboro. Serving children in four counties, the Play School Day Care Center served an average of 92 children in 1992-93. In 1992, a Center was opened in Harrisburg, a town of 1,900 located 15 miles from Wiener, serving an average of 115 children.

### Program Description

The Play School Day Care Center started as a private day care center. In 1991 it incorporated as a private, non-profit organization and moved to an abandoned elementary school building on the Weiner Public School campus. Starting with a $75,000 Arkansas Better Chance Grant from the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Commission, the program has grown. Children with a birth weight of 5 1/2 pounds or less, children of teen-age parents, children who have been abused or neglected, children of substance abusers, and children of low-income families are referred to the Center from a variety of social service and health care practitioners.

The program is designed to address the following needs of infant and preschool at-risk children and their families from four counties:

1. School readiness
2. Parent education
3. Parent involvement
4. Health and social services
5. Community involvement
6. Academic improvement
7. Child care
8. Staff development
9. Volunteer sick baby clinic
10. Volunteer "Baby Basic" classes

The Center's program involves the support and cooperation of the health department, Department of Human Services, Weiner Public School, parents, teachers, business and community members, and other organizations. Utilizing a case management approach, the Center provides comprehensive and continuous services to young children and their families.

All Center services are provided in the school. Services to children include developmentally appropriate practices, nutrition services, and child care. Social and health services, counseling, and screening are provided as needed. Tutoring and mentoring for school age children is offered by a parent. Through their cooperative arrangement with the local school districts, the center provides all early childhood services required of school districts by the state.

Parents have available to them social welfare services, parenting and literacy skills training, support groups and counseling, and training and employment counseling. Health services and Adult Basic Education are available through referral. Parents and community representatives are included on the advisory board.

The program is run with the philosophy that all children with needs will be served. For 1992-93, the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission awarded the Center an Arkansas Better Chance Grant for $198,750 for 80 children. The Wiener Center received a federal Infant and Toddler Grant for $35,000, while the Harrisburg Center received $40,000. A Dependent Care Grant from the federal government for $30,000 helps fund the before- and after-school day care program. The Department of Human Services provides monies through vouchers for providing services to children under their purvue and through Project Success. In addition, paying clients are served, and contributions by individuals and organizations are used for people who do not qualify for other help. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) pays high school students salaries to work part-time in the Center. Eighty percent of those students have been hired as full-time employees after graduating from high school.

Of the 63 students in kindergarten and first grades at Weiner School, 34 had previously attended the Play School Day Care Center. Of those 34, 79 percent have tested above average, and 15 percent tested average on the Stanford Achievement Test and the MAT-6. Of the 79 students in grades 2-8 who attended Play School, 44 percent are in the gifted and talented program. In 1989, the founder and administrator of the Center was appointed by the Governor to the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission. The program was one of 14 in Arkansas, and one of 48 in the United States to be nominated in the Child Care Challenge to showcase model childcare facilities by the National Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families. The program has been featured on local television, as well as the Jonesboro Sun and Harrisburg Modern News.

Long term plans included opening another Center in the nearby community of Truman, Arkansas, which was accomplished the fall of 1993. They are currently working closely with the community to bring the plans to fruition.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Arkansas Better Chance Grant
- Vouchers from Department of Human Services
- Project Success (Department of Human Services program)
- Infant and Toddler Grant
- Dependent Care Grant
- JTPA
- Paying clients
- Contributions from individuals and organizations

**Staffing and staff development**

- One administrator
- Two program managers
- Five lead teachers
- Four paraprofessionals
- Three support staff

**Program Contact**

Terrie Senteney, Administrator
Play School Day Care Center, Inc.
Route 1, Box A-31-A
Weiner, AR 72479

501/684-7393

## Positive Action School System (PASS)
## Paris Public Schools
## Paris, Arkansas

**Target At-risk Population:** Students in grades K-12

### Community Description/School Context

Paris, Arkansas is located approximately 45 miles east of Fort Smith. The Paris Public School System covers an area of 233 square miles in Logan County and serves approximately 1,250 students (95 percent are White non-Hispanic, 1 percent are Hispanic and 4 percent are Black). The School System maintains four campuses: an elementary school, middle school, high school, and the Positive Action School System (PASS) site.

The region is considered to be socioeconomically disadvantaged, with an average annual income of $9,176. According to a 1991 needs assessment, conducted by the Department of Human Services, among the most pressing needs in the Paris and surrounding area are job training, a better educated populace, and teen pregnancy intervention.

As viewed by the school administration, the community is supportive of the local educational system, passing two school tax increases during a seven year period. Further, the parent/community volunteer program in the district has been recognized as exemplary in the state.

### Program Description

The Positive Action School System (PASS) program was developed in the fall of 1992 to meet the needs of students who were not succeeding within the regular classroom setting. It was patterned after an alternative learning center in Tomball, Texas (for a fuller description of this program, see page TX-38 of this directory). Students are considered at risk due to low academic achievement (84 percent of students assigned to PASS this year scored below the 50th percentile on standardized tests), socially dysfunctional behavior, poor home environments, and/or low economic status. Ten to fifteen students from grades K-12 participate in the PASS program at any one given time. They participate for 30 "successful" days. Students are nominated for participation in the PASS program by a parent, teacher, principal, or counselor. These nominations go to a screening committee for selection. This committee also makes recommendations for replacements of those students who are returned to their regular school assignments after the 30-day program.

The focus of the PASS program is twofold — to build self-esteem and to improve academic success. Activities incorporated into the program include one-to-one instruction, small group instruction and discussion, large group instruction, and computer-assisted instruction. Individual and group counseling is also provided. In the fall of 1992 a ropes course/program was developed on the middle school campus as part of the PASS program. A two or three day "Adventure Based Counseling" experience on the ropes course has been developed to enhance the PASS curriculum. This experience is designed to improve self-esteem by expanding students' perceptions of what they are able to achieve. Self-esteem is further enhanced as students are given opportunities to participate in service opportunities within the community.

Parent involvement is an important component of the PASS program. PASS staff make contacts by phone, letter, or person-to-person weekly to keep parents informed of progress and problems.

The location of the PASS program is removed from the other campuses and is staffed by one certified educator and one paraprofessional. Parents enroll their child at the PASS site in person. They are encouraged to volunteer their time with the program. A community advisory council has also been established to help guide the program as it develops.

Both objective and subjective data are being collected to evaluate the program, including standardized pre- and post-tests for students. Preliminary data suggest that student attendance rates have improved for students participating in the PASS program. Discipline problems have been reduced, both during and after participation in PASS. Seventy-six percent of the students who participated in the 30-day PASS program improved academically such that they were successfully promoted to the next grade. One student successfully completed GED requirements.

The long term plans include establishing a larger stand-alone site for middle school/high school students and an on-site elementary program.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Arkansas Department of Education:
  Alternative Education Program
  Compensatory Education Program
- Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation Mini Grant

**Staffing and staff development**

- One certified teacher serves as facilitator
- One paraprofessional assistant
- Counseling support from school counselors as needed

**Program Contact**

Anne E. Sneed, Alternative Education Coordinator
Paris Public Schools
602 North 10th
P.O. Box 645
Paris, AR 72855

501/963-6531 or 501/963-3143

## Environmental Program
## Greenbrier High School
## Greenbrier, Arkansas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All students in the school

### Community Description/School Context

Greenbrier is a rural community of approximately 2,100. It is located in north-central Arkansas, about 45 miles north of Little Rock. The school district is the largest employer in the community. No other significant industry supports the residents of Greenbrier. Many people have chosen to live in Greenbrier because of its rural setting but work in the larger nearby town of Conway or in Little Rock. Indeed, the community is experiencing significant growth at an estimated annual rate of 5 percent. As is true of many rural, small communities, the school serves as a source of community pride and social entertainment.

There are very few minority status residents in Greenbrier. About 99 percent are White, with the remaining 1 percent African-American. Roughly 20 percent of the school-age population live in poverty. The Greenbrier Public School District closely matches the community demographics, though many of the 1400 students are bussed from the surrounding rural area. Thirty percent of the district's students participate in the free/ reduced lunch program.

Greenbrier High School serves 350 students in grades 10 through 12. It is known for having a strong technological focus. It also provides a wide array of advanced courses for students (i.e., calculus, chemistry, two levels of physics, advanced placement courses in American History, English, Science, and Mathematics) even though the high school is quite small.

### Program Description

Prior to the 1993-94 school year the high school environmental education program was taught using a traditional, classroom-bound approach. When a new teacher was hired in 1993, a new approach toward environmental education began. Although there is still a traditional classroom curriculum, much of the program has become a "hands on" curriculum beyond the school building through involving students in several outdoor projects.

The school is located such that a "nature trail" is incorporated as part of the high school campus. In this first year of the Environmental Program, students have cooperated in building three bridges on the nature trail and a pier at the edge of the nature trail pond. In addition to applying academic contents from other courses to the project (mathematics,

physics, etc.), students learned valuable lessons in teamwork and other work-related skills. Self-esteem is enhanced by providing students with expanded responsibilities and a sense of accomplishment through their participation in these large-scale projects. Community awareness and pride are also further developed.

The Environmental Program also targeted the building of a greenhouse on the high school campus. As plans developed, the simple greenhouse plan grew into a more complex biosphere where students can study actual plants and animals in a "tropical rainforest" environment.

Field studies and extended field trips (two-three days) are also an integral part of the Environmental Program. Students learn through doing as they have learned about testing for water pollution, mountain climbing, cave exploring, orienteering (figuring out where you are when lost in a wilderness setting), etc. An extended field trip is also planned for summer school as part of an intensive three-week course. This week-long field trip will incorporate a number of environment-related activities in an outdoor camping experience.

As the Environmental Program progresses, additional outdoor and "hands-on" projects will be planned, not only as fun activities, but also as a means toward the goal of becoming more environmentally sensitive, aware, and involved.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The program is funded through local district allocation. Additional funds have been received from organizations like the National Flyfishers Association.

**Staffing and staff development**

The Environmental Program was designed by the environmental education teacher. No additional staff or staff development has been required.

**Program Contact**

Mr. Tim Stephenson
Environmental Education Teacher
Greenbrier High School
72 Green Valley Dr.
Greenbrier, AR 72058

501/679-4236

## Portfolios—An Alternative Form of Assessment
## Nashville Junior High School
## Nashville, Arkansas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All 6th and 8th grade students

### Community Description/School Context

Nashville is a community of approximately 5,000 located in southwest Arkansas. It is 50 miles northeast of Texarkana and 120 miles southwest of Little Rock. Tyson Foods and Poulan are two major industries in the community. The unemployment rate in the area is low, though about 35 percent of the school-age children live in families below the poverty level. The population is comprised of approximately 67 percent White, 31 percent African-American, with the balance comprised of Asians and Hispanics.

As in many small communities, the school is a very important part of the community life. Many in the Nashville are lifelong residents and have a strong sense of pride in the school's academic and athletic programs. The school district serves about 1,800 students on four campuses (K-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-12). Almost 75 percent of the student body is transported to and from school in this consolidated district. About 42 percent participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

### Program Description

The National Council for Teachers of Mathematics has promoted reform in mathematics instruction to fit with the professional curriculum standards established by this organization. These standards emphasize that students must acquire capabilities to solve open-ended problems, to analyze and interpret data, and to communicate thinking processes. Students also need to formulate conjectures, and be able to carry out extended projects. These skills are not well suited for traditional forms of assessment.

In addition to these mathematics goals the district has an emphasis on whole language approaches to language arts and an overall move toward integrating academic content across subject areas. When these local goals are coupled with state requirements focusing more upon higher order thinking skills, etc., the district decided that alternative assessment approaches were needed, both for ongoing daily student work as well as for summative evaluations. Consequently, the Nashville School District agreed to pilot portfolios on all 6th and 8th grade students. The Arkansas State Department of Education granted a waiver on the Arkansas Minimum Performance Test in order to assess the effectiveness of a more nontraditional approach to assess the academic progress of students.

Rather than the traditional "pencil-and-paper" tests and homework grades, students construct portfolios of their learnings by including projects that inform upon their creativity, thought processes, and critical thinking skills. From these "working portfolios" projects are chosen for inclusion in assessment portfolios.

Long term plans are to have portfolios for every student K-12. Possibly, the portfolios will be passed on with the student each year.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

This program was begun as a pilot project supported by the Arkansas State Department of Education. Start-up costs are estimated at $5,000 for materials. Ongoing materials costs are estimated at approximately $500 per year. Materials included supplies needed to develop and store portfolios. Costs were also incurred in providing universal access to the district's curriculum (based upon state-mandated frameworks) to each faculty member.

**Staffing and staff development**

Six days of staff development for mathematics and language arts teachers have been provided at no cost to the local district through the Arkansas State Department of Education. Other faculty have received similar training through resources within the district.

An assistant superintendent is charged with implementing the Portfolio Assessment program. She works closely with building principals and teachers. The staff met four times during the past school year to have additional in-service training and to analyze progress.

**Program Contact**

Mr. Johnny Wilson
Mathematics Teacher
Nashville Junior High School
1000 North 8th Street
Nashville, AR 71852

501/845-3418

## Alternative Assessment
## Dardanelle Elementary School
## Dardanelle, Arkansas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All students in the school

### Community Description/School Context

Dardanelle is located in the Arkansas River Valley and is the oldest town between Little Rock and Fort Smith. Located approximately 80 miles northeast of Little Rock, Dardanelle is accessible to commercial river traffic along the Arkansas River. The economic base of the community rests primarily upon the poultry industry, farming, and timber. Tourism (hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, etc.) is also a mainstay of the local economy because of the natural beauty and resources of the area.

The ethnic makeup of the school district mirrors that of the community — 96 percent White, 3 percent African-American, and 1 percent Hispanic. About 25 percent of the more than 1,400 students enrolled in the school district participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

Dardanelle Elementary School is currently comprised of two campuses separated by a one-block area. The Primary Elementary building contains kindergarten through third grade classrooms, and the Intermediate houses grades four and five. There are approximately 120-130 students per grade level. The district plans to move the elementary program into a new structure to be located near the secondary schools. However, kindergarten will be housed in the current Intermediate school.

### Program Description

Over a five-year period, Dardanelle Elementary School eliminated the assignment of letter grades for students in kindergarten through second grade. Instead of grades on report cards, these young students are assessed using developmentally appropriate indicators of progress in academic, social, and other areas. These indicators have been developed by teachers and other school district personnel.

With the "benchmark" indicators in mind, teachers and students work together to assemble an ongoing portfolio of accumulated artifacts. These artifacts include such things as samples of the student's work (selected by teacher and/or student), teacher's observational notes, student's own periodic self-evaluations, videotapes and/or audiotapes of student "in action," pieces of writing at various stages of completion, tests, checklists,

unit projects, etc. The main idea is to collect a wide array of learning indicators to provide an overall, complete understanding of the student's academic and other progress. This is done continuously (as contrasted with periodic testing) to illustrate student academic growth.

Long term plans include clarification of alternative/portfolio assessment over time for each child. It is planned that all elementary students will have comprehensive folders that will clearly define academic progress, strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and special needs. Assessments will be measured in developmental terms with benchmarks of success.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Special Equipment Needed**

1 1/2 inch ring binder for each child's portfolio
Location/rack/shelf for teachers to store binders
1 audio tape (30 minutes) per student
Videotapes and videocamera to tape student progress (optional)
Checklists of "benchmarks" to gauge student progress in reading, mathematics, and Language Arts
3-hole punches

**Sources of funding**

The Alternative Assessment program is funded primarily through local district moneys for paper, copying of assessment instruments, videocamera, tape recorders, training for staff ($3,000). Additional funds ($1,000) have come from a mini-grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation (used to purchase audio and video tapes, binders, hole punches, racks, and learning styles inventories).

**Staffing and staff development**

Staff development needs included an orientation to alternative and portfolio assessment approaches and philosophy. Specific strategies for deciding what kinds of products to select for inclusion in the portfolios to align with curricula were part of the in-service training.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Program start-up: | 6 hours training<br>$300 consultant cost<br>$2,000 materials cost<br>$1,000 equipment | Current: | Varying hours training<br>—consultant cost<br>$500 materials cost<br>$500 other (tapes, film) |
| TOTAL | $3,300 | | $1,000 |

**Program Contact**

Mr. David F. Garrett
Principal
Dardanelle Elementary School
900 North Fifth Street
Dardanelle, AR 72834

501/229-3707

# Block Scheduling
# Midland High School
# Pleasant Plains, Arkansas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All 9-12 high school students

## Community Description/School Context

The Midland School District serves Pleasant Plains and Floral, two very small communities (less than 500 each) in north-central Arkansas. These communities are 8 miles apart and about 75 miles northeast of Little Rock. The elementary school program of the Midland district is in Floral, while the secondary students (grades 7-12) attend school in Pleasant Plains. More than 99 percent of the 620 students in this district are White. The economic base of the area is low, with more than 30 percent of the population living below the poverty level set by the federal government. About half of the student population participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

## Program Description

Midland High School implemented block scheduling at the beginning of the 1994-95 school year in response to the results of a state mandated self study, called the Comprehensive Outcomes Evaluation. This evaluation, including input from students and parents, was conducted by school districts statewide. The Midland results suggested that changes needed to be made to improve the school climate at the secondary school. Student morale was low, as was achievement. The school leadership considered block scheduling as a possible answer. After visiting a school district that had instituted block scheduling the previous year, Midland High School reorganized around a block scheduling format for the 1994-95 school year.

Block scheduling is a way to adjust the daily schedule of secondary schools. Typically, time in classes is lengthened to 80-90 minutes per class and the number of classes taken by students per day is reduced. Because of the lengthened time in each class per day, courses are completed in a semester rather than the full school year. Sometimes this schedule adjustment allows for more courses to be offered to students through the school year. However, the primary objective of block scheduling for Midland High School has been to make school a more enjoyable experience for the students and staff. Therefore, they retired their traditional seven period per day schedule and substituted the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| 8:00 - 9:00 | Optional "social" time |
| 9:00 - 10:10 | 1st class period |
| 10:15 - 11:25 | 2nd class period |
| 11:30 - 1:35 | 3rd class period and lunch |
| 1:40 - 2:20 | 4th class period (elective) |
| 2:30 - 3:10 | 5th class period (elective) |

The school day officially begins at 9 a.m. However, the school is open at 8 a.m. for an optional social time. Students can get together with their friends or finish homework. This first hour is a planning period for teachers, so students are also able to meet with teachers to receive any additional help that they might need or complete make-up work/tests. School clubs also meet during this first hour.

Courses required for graduation are offered during the "block" times from 9 in the morning to 1:35 in the afternoon. Three courses are taken in the fall semester and three are taken in the spring. Midland High School arranges student schedules so that English and mathematics courses are not taken in the same semester. Vocational programs are also offered in these block scheduled time slots.

The last two periods of the school day have remained in the traditional 40 minute time periods. These are elective courses and are offered on a pass/fail basis. They are optional for juniors and seniors, though most of these older students remain on campus to participate. Elective courses include such topics as photography, community theater, aerobics, critiquing movies, band, athletics, computer "keyboarding," etc. The teaching schedule is such that all teachers have their planning period during one of these two periods of the day. This allows for greater opportunities for collaboration among faculty.

School leaders of the Midland school district report that attendance has improved since they reorganized to the block scheduling format. Library usage has also increased by 50 percent and vandalism has decreased. Teachers are pleased in that they have fewer curricular preparations per day, and they are better able to teach more complex or difficult concepts in the longer class periods.

Among the administrative benefits is the cost savings in textbooks. Because courses are a semester in length, they may be taught twice each year. Consequently, only half of the textbooks are needed at any one time, thereby making available additional funds for various other curricular materials (supplementary texts, software, etc.).

Although the benefits of block scheduling for Midland high school are varied, school leaders are most pleased in that the desired attitude changes in students and teachers have occurred. Virtually everyone is happier with this organizational change.

**Program Contact**

Mr. Richard Blevins, Superintendent, or
Mr. Lee Roy Brewer, Curriculum Coordinator
Midland School District
Highway 167
Pleasant Plains, AR 72528

501/345-2852 or 501/345-8844
FAX: 501/345-2086

# Integrating Curriculum Through Technology
# Siloam Springs High School
# Siloam Springs, Arkansas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All high school students (grades 10-12)

**Community Description/School Context**

Siloam Springs is a small town of approximately 8,500 located at the Arkansas/ Oklahoma border in northwest Arkansas. It is about 30 miles north and west of Fayetteville and 70 miles east of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The population is comprised of approximately 90 percent White, 4 percent Hispanic, and 4 percent Native Indian. Asians and Blacks are included in the remaining 2 percent.

About 25 percent of the school-age children live in families below the poverty level set by the federal government. Approximately 40 percent of the students enrolled in the Siloam Springs school system qualify for the federal free/reduced lunch program.

The school district serves 2,300 students on four campuses. The elementary program is divided by grade level between two campuses. One campus serves the kindergartners and 1st graders. The other campus, actually two older campuses joined by a new library/media/gym/administrative complex, houses the remaining elementary students (grades 2-5). There are also two campuses serving secondary students. A new middle school will open for the 1995-96 school year and will serve grades 6-8. The high school had served grades 10-12. But, with the opening of the new middle school, the old junior high school, which is situated next door to the high school, will be used with the existing high school building to serve the high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

**Program Description**

The Siloam Springs school district has traditionally had a strong commitment to integrating various technologies into their schools. School leaders believe that students of today need experiences with technology in order to be prepared for life in the 21st century. As a result, several significant technology infusion goals are being pursued. One goal is for every classroom in the district to be supplied with 5 computers networked building- and district-wide. This goal is being accomplished one grade per year. The new middle school has been "wired" to accommodate wide-ranging technologies. Another goal is to link all schools and other community resources via fiber optic cable. This will allow for students, teachers, and administrators to pursue and share information.

Currently at the high school, several teachers are collaborating on several unique projects. These projects are seeking to integrate several academic content areas in ways that provide students with high level problem-solving experiences. These integrated projects involve the use of computers to enhance the cooperative nature of these experiences and to develop skills in using electronic media for reporting. Because the school's computers are networked, students are able to collaborate on projects that cross subject areas. Four programs are highlighted:

**Creative publications** — a cooperative effort between business and art. This two-hour block is team taught by the high school art and business teachers. By combining desktop publishing and marketing skills, an integrated approach to learning graphic design is used. Businesses in and around Siloam Springs are contacted by the teachers to bring their graphic arts needs to the students in this program. Projects have included the design of business logos, advertisement flyers, and larger advertising campaigns. Students interact with a business leader to determine the exact graphic needs. Then the students work individually or in groups to meet those needs. The teachers next select the top 4-6 products to present to the business. Presentations are made and the business leader selects the student product that best meets his/her expectations.

**Renaissance** — a cooperative effort between English and drama. During one nine-week period the English and drama teachers work with their students together to explore the Renaissance, which spanned the 14th - 17th centuries. Though several cooperative projects are pursued in this integrated unit, the major "event" is a renaissance fair that is developed and hosted by the students. Since Shakespeare lived and worked during this time, different aspects of Elizabethan England are recreated at the fair, including booths that display different aspects of renaissance life, food, clothing, activities, etc. There are also jugglers and other period entertainers, including students who present renaissance skits that they have written.

**Humanities** — a cooperative effort between English and history. Like the creative publications program, the English and history teachers team teach a two period block for the entire school year. Under the central theme of "why I am who I am," the students study thematic units on topics such as the Greeks, the Renaissance, the Romans, war and conflict, etc. As the year comes to a close, students are divided into groups, each selecting one of the units studied throughout the year. Mastery of the content is demonstrated by each group doing a multimedia presentation in a public forum.

**Paradigm** — a cooperative effort among the core disciplines of English, science, history, and mathematics. The paradigm program is one period of the school day, and students are in one of the four classes at that time. The four teachers have a common planning period. In addition to learning the content of the English, mathematics, science, or history class, students also work on a "paradigm" project throughout the

year. This paradigm component is centered around the theme of "changing paradigms to meet the challenges of the 21st century." Early in the school year students from these four classes identify several topics of interest under this theme. These topics have concrete relevance to northwest Arkansas and include such ideas as recreation and its effect on the area, healthcare needs and changing disease issues, water quality, etc. Several topics of greatest student interest are identified and students are assigned to groups (group size averages 6 students). The groups include students from all four content areas. The paradigm projects incorporate aspects of all four content areas into their year-long activities. Periodically throughout the year, students will conduct background research on their issue of concern. They gather information about current conditions, conduct interviews with knowledgeable people in the region and experts in the field, do surveys of public opinion, etc. to address their issue. Current conditions will be described, current and future problems/needs identified, and solutions explored. The project culminates with multimedia public presentations. For instance, one project investigated water quality issues and presented a waste water management proposal to the city council. This proposal was later adopted by the council.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

Collaborating with others on integrating curricula such as those discussed above, require significant time in curriculum development. Typically this planning has occurred in summer. Involved teachers have applied for various small grants to fund the additional time required to develop curriculum and the related documents. These funding sources have largely been from local and regional sources.

### Staffing and staff development

The use of technology in integrating curriculum has not required additional staff. However, all teachers involved in the curriculum-integrated programs mentioned above have received training in foundations of curriculum integration from Brown University (St. Louis). The school district has funded these staff development opportunities.

## Program Contact

Dr. Mary Gunter, Assistant Superintendent, or
Mr. Rick Jones, Technology Coordinator (email: jones@sshs.nwsc.k12.ar.us)
Siloam Springs School District
847 South Dogwood Street
Siloam Springs, AR 72761

Phone: 501/524-3191

## Youth Education Success — YES
## St. Tammany Parish
## Covington, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** 7th and 8th grade at-risk students

### Community Description/School Context

St. Tammany Parish is comprised of a number of diverse communities that vary in size from tiny villages to large urban and suburban cities. The parish seat of government and school board administration is in Covington, a town of approximately 27,000 inhabitants, located across Lake Ponchartrain from New Orleans. The economy in this area revolves around vegetable truck farming and horse farms.

The ethnic make-up of the 29,293 students enrolled in the Parish is 83.2 percent White non-Hispanic, 15.6 percent Black, 0.7 percent Hispanic, 0.1 percent American Indian, and 0.4 percent Asian.

The YES Program currently is operating in five of the junior high schools in the parish: one in Pearl River, a tiny community of only 2,000 residents; three in the Slidell area (urban); and one in Mandeville, a suburb of New Orleans. Two of these schools, St. Tammany Junior High School and Pearl River Junior High School, are Chapter 1 schools, with 26 percent and 27 percent of their students participating in the free and reduced lunch program, respectively.

### Program Description

Educators' concerns about the high dropout rate of 38 percent for the parish led to the development of the YES program. The majority of the students were dropping out either in the transition between eighth to ninth grade or in ninth grade, thus junior high school students were targeted for the intervention. Three schools, Boyet Junior High School (JHS), Mandeville JHS, and St. Tammany JHS were the initial sites, and the program.

The Youth Education Success Program has been chosen as a model drop-out prevention program for at-risk students in the 7th and 8th grades, state-wide. It is one of eight models used in block grant funding in Louisiana. Its original source of funding was competitive grant money. Because of the tremendous success experienced by students as this program was implemented across the parish, taxpayers voted to make funds available on a yearly basis for program implementation.

The goals of the YES Program provide for both behavioral and academic outcomes. The results expected include but are not limited to:

- improve academic achievement of students 12 years or older who have been retained one or more years and whose academic skills are below grade level,
- improve students' interpersonal skills,
- provide remedial instruction to meet students' academic needs,
- improve student attendance, and
- improve communication with parents.

The pupil-teacher ratio is maintained at 15:1 in a self-contained environment located on campus. Students are interviewed and selected from the 7th and 8th grade population and meet four of the following six criteria:

1) unable to meet promotional requirements,
2) scored below the 35th percentile on the parish norm-referenced test,
3) unable to complete assignments independently,
4) older than other students at the same grade level,
5) poor attendance record, or
6) previous interventions have proven unsuccessful.

Many strategies contribute to the overall success of this program. The small classes allow teachers to individualize the instruction utilizing diverse teaching styles and addressing individual student needs. Another important aspect of individualized and small group instruction is the ability to provide students with immediate feedback. More time is allowed for class discussion of different topics, and teachers ask students questions that require them to think and analyze. In conjunction with the class discussions, students keep a journal or log of their thoughts regarding the topics discussed.

Other non-traditional strategies used successfully in the YES Program include cooperative learning techniques, peer-tutoring, self-concept building activities, group and individual counseling scheduled regularly, bond-building activities for teachers and their students, and high interest activities utilized with curriculum delivery. Classroom settings are nontraditional and emphasize comfort to make the learning environment more welcoming to students.

Parents must give their consent to the student's placement and agree to be involved with their child before a student can be accepted to the program. Initially a parent orientation workshop is provided. After the orientation, teachers communicate at least quarterly to update parents on student progress. One teacher held a seven-week series of parenting classes from 7-9:30 P.M., and reported a 100 percent attendance rate.

Student's pre- and post-test scores on the California Achievement Test have improved significantly for each year of the YES Program. Average gains in mean grade equivalent scores have ranged from 1.3 to 2.1, indicating that students in the program are responding positively. In the program's first graduating class, 50 percent of the students received a high school diploma, and 30 percent received their GED. Only 20 percent actually dropped out, which is significant when compared to national data that indicates that 90 percent of students who have been retained two or more years drop out of school.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Initial funding, 1987-90 (3 years) competitive grant, State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, Louisiana Quality Education Support Fund 8(g)
- Current funding is provided by the State Board of Louisiana, Quality Education Support fund for Elementary and Secondary Schools in the form of an annual block grant award
- Job Training Partnership Act Funds (JTPA)

### Staffing and staff development

One elementary-certified classroom teacher is required for each 15 students enrolled in the program. Teachers must be able to "connect" with students, be flexible, caring and willing to "go the extra mile" to meet the students and their parents needs. Teachers of students who are "mainstreamed" into regular classes meet regularly with the regular teachers. Students who have been mainstreamed have demonstrated their success by making the honor rolls. Teachers are provided intensive in-service training for two full days during the summer and one day per quarter after the initial training. Trainers serve as resources to the teachers, and include parish staff members, a former YES teacher, and a trained psychotherapist.

## Program Contact

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# Beauregard Parish Standards of Excellence
# Responding to the Needs of Our Youth
# Beauregard Parish
# DeRidder, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Pre-Kindergarten - 12th grade at-risk students

## Community Description/School Context

The school board administrative offices for the Beauregard Parish school system are located in DeRidder, Louisiana, in the northwest area of the state, approximately 20 miles from the military base of Fort Polk. The area's economy is fairly stable due to the military base and several large paper and plastics manufacturing businesses. There are no centers for recreation or entertainment, including movie theaters.

There are eleven schools in Beauregard Parish, all remotely located with relatively small enrollments. The largest school is DeRidder High School with 938 students. However, the total parish school enrollment is 6,629 students. Of those, approximately 87 percent are White non-Hispanic, 22 percent are Black, and 1 percent are Hispanic, Vietnamese, and other nationalities. Approximately 43 percent of the students participate in the free or reduced lunch program, and 39 percent are eligible for Chapter 1 funds. The strong bond between the community members and the school promotes a supportive relationship. In fact during the past 30 years, this parish has not defeated an education tax bill.

## Program Description

Beauregard Parish's "Responding to the Needs of Our Youth" program, which began in 1986, is an example of how a school system can serve rural, at-risk students through a planned, comprehensive program of many services that are provided to *all students*, from pre-kindergarten to seniors in high school. School officials designed the program to reduce the possibility of an at-risk student not being helped.

Beauregard Parish students are provided with a wide variety of opportunities in addition to the traditional academic offerings. The parish has developed a local course syllabus to extend the state curriculum guides, and the curriculum is uniform across all of the parish schools. This uniformity has allowed schools to develop a system to closely monitor student progress. The curriculum is correlated to all levels of skills tested in the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP). Students in grades 3, 5, 7, 10, and 11

take the LEAP, while students in grades 4, 6, and 9 take norm-referenced tests. Eighth grade students take the Career and Occupational Preference System (COPS). In addition, students are given teacher-generated mastery tests to determine strengths and deficits. At the secondary level, parish-wide final examinations are given at each grade level. In addition to assessing student learning, these examinations provide college-bound students with valuable experience in taking exams that cover an entire course, and that integrate topics across the curriculum.

Curriculum Management Plans are developed for each student in grades K-8 in Mathematics and Reading, profiling the skills taught and mastered, and the specific skills needing re-teaching. These plans are updated every semester to monitor student progress.

Programs are offered for students of all ages, including the very young. A pre-school, special education class is provided for approximately 155 disabled children. Eighteen children are served in the Model Early Childhood Program. Head Start and Welcome Home programs are a cooperative effort between community agencies. The Head Start Program increases the school readiness of many children, while the Welcome Home program focuses on prenatal information, child development, and parenting skills for teenage pregnant young women. Prior to these programs, there were 75 students who needed placement in a special K-1 class, but this year only 19 students needing such placement.

Chapter 1 funding supports transition classes for students between kindergarten and first grade, first and second grade, and fourth and fifth grade. These classes are small and staffed by a teacher and an aide. The purpose of these classes is not to retain students, but to give them more opportunities to improve their social and academic skills. As soon as the students are on grade level, they move into the regular classes.

For older students, a program known as *The Gift of Time* has been instituted at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade levels. Students who have been retained in a grade can "catch-up" and be promoted to the next grade during the next year if they maintain at least a "C" average and exhibit "good citizenship." This opportunity is only offered once to a student.

For students who are at high risk for dropping out of school, the Academic Discipline/ Alternative Placement (ADAP) is offered to students in 9-12 grades, and provides for a separate environment, alternative curriculum, innovative methods, morning and afternoon classes, and intensive counseling. Students are referred to this program informally by themselves, parents, and teachers. The program is an alternative to suspension or expulsion, and it is designed to fit the students' individualized needs. Both regular and special education students benefit from the attention made possible by the low pupil/ teacher ratio and individualized attention. A federally-funded grant allowed the program to add a consultant to provide additional assistance to the students.

The Vocational Alternative Program for special education students in high school provides students who are at high risk for dropping out of school with an alternative route to a diploma. In their first year in high school, these students work in class on academics and social skills; during their second year, they are placed in "on-the-job" training within the school; and during their third year they are placed in a job in the community and receive vocational credits. Beauregard Parish teachers have provided in-service training to every region in the state in the vocational curriculum.

To meet state mandates for eight hours of drug awareness instruction, the Drug-Free Schools funding provides for the *McGruff Curriculum* to be in every K-4 classroom. These are multi-media lessons dealing with decision making, safety, positive self-esteem, and drug awareness. In addition, the Sheriff's Department has assigned a deputy to the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program for the fifth graders of the parish. This curriculum addresses self-esteem, drug awareness, and refusal skills. Students in other grade levels also benefit.

Telephone hotlines are used to meet a number of needs. The hotlines are used to monitor attendance (automatically dial the child's home), to provide information about upcoming school activities, and to list homework assignments. The *I Care Hotline*, a toll-free crisis hotline, targets adolescents who are experiencing problems and crises. Two suicides were averted last year because of the immediate intervention provided through this service.

*Natural Helpers* is a program based on the premise that there is a 'natural" network in every school that can be tapped for resources. Each year students at every grade level are surveyed and asked to name two students that they would "turn to" if they had a problem. These names are pooled to create the network of "natural helpers." A two-and-a-half day training retreat is provided for these identified students to teach them how to actively listen and to help friends help themselves.

*Teens Modeling for Youth* is a peer assistance leadership program. Approximately 52 "teen models" are chosen by teachers at the high school level to provide leadership and positive role models for at-risk elementary students. The high school students are chosen on the basis of grades, a drug-free lifestyle, being involved in school, enthusiasm, etc. They receive one full day of intensive training about dealing with elementary-aged students. Elementary teachers refer at-risk students who need positive role models to the teenagers. Throughout the year these "teen models" visit every classroom, K-4, once a month in pairs to provide activities and games involving self-esteem and positive drug awareness messages.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Drug Free School Funding
- Chapter 1
- Title II of Dwight D. Eisenhower Funds (federal)
- Minimum Foundation Funding
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, Louisiana Quality Education Support Fund 8(g)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 101-476)

### Staffing and staff development

The superintendent of Beauregard Parish schools provides scheduled monthly forums with students and teachers in each school. Follow-up meeting are held with central office staff to address the concerns shared in the meetings. Each campus has at least one counselor, even the elementary campuses. Counselors spend 75 percent of their time with students and meet monthly to share information about current issues and individual campus programs. Additionally, all faculty members at each campus are trained in the use of cooperative learning strategies to promote peer coaching for instructional improvement. This in-service is offered periodically throughout the year. Teachers receive in-service training across grade levels and subject areas, and there is systematic provision of release time for teachers to observe their peers both on and off campus.

## Program Contacts

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## Tangipahoa Parish Magnet High School
## Evening Alternative High School
## Tangipahoa Parish
## Hammond, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Dropouts 16 years and older

### Community Description/School Context

Tangipahoa Parish is a long, narrow strip of land extending north and south, approximately 26 miles from the Mississippi border. Hammond, seat of the school system for the parish, is 86 miles from Baton Rouge and 68 miles north of New Orleans. There are thirty-four schools located in nine small communities, enrolling 17,382. Hammond is a rural community of 13,000 residents, dependent on businesses related to the oil and petroleum industry and on agriculture.

### Program Description

The Magnet School is an example of an alternative school that has proved so successful in serving at-risk students that it has expanded beyond its boundaries to serve students from the two neighboring parishes of St. Tammany and Livingston. The Magnet School in Tangipahoa Parish was established in response to the 50 percent dropout rate of students in the parish. The main reasons for students leaving school were disenchantment with the traditional education setting and family economic pressures to work.

The Magnet School has been recognized in a publication by the Louisiana Department of Education as an outstanding alternative program model. It replicates another excellent magnet school, Northdale Magnet Academy, located in East Baton Rouge Parish. These programs enjoy a reputation of being among the most successful programs in the area of dropout recovery.

During the summer of 1990, members of the parish staff developed the curriculum and operational plan for the Magnet School. The school began with approximately 130 participants, but its success prompted school officials to provide two locations for the Magnet School (north and south). Now the enrollment tops 550 and it is still growing. Of those students enrolled, 28 percent are Black and 72 percent are White non-Hispanic.

School hours are 4:45 to 9:15 P.M. to accommodate students who need to work and to provide an alternative setting for students needing to "catch-up" in credits. Students are

identified for the program in a variety of ways. Half of the students are dropouts who are 16 years or older. The other students are referred if they are not passing three or more of their classes in the traditional setting, if they are one year or more behind, or if they are seniors who will not graduate with their class. The classes are scheduled on Monday through Thursday, with Friday scheduled for physical fitness and on-the-job safety. The majority of the students work and receive Carnegie units as credit for their work experiences.

Each year teachers use the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) test criteria to evaluate students' strengths and deficits. An individually prescribed course of study is then designed to remediate and reteach deficit skills. There are no more than 12-15 students per class. This small teacher/pupil ratio and the individualized educational plans combined with ongoing short-term diagnostics to create an environment that promotes successful academic and personal growth.

The Hammond Chamber of Commerce encourages all businesses to provide incentives for students in the form of free services or even monetary awards. The mayor presents certificates of award for honor students.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

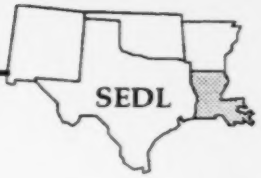
- 25% Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funds
- Louisiana Quality Education Support Fund
- Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) funds
- Louisiana Power and Light Corp. (local private funds)

**Staffing**

The south campus, Hammond Junior High School, is the largest location with 450 students and 34 teachers. The north campus, Amite Westside Junior High, has 70 students and 7 teachers.

**Program Contacts**

Dr. Carl Ingram, Principal
Mr. Sherry Brannon, Counselor
Tangipahoa Parish Magnet High School

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Hammond, LA 70401

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## Genesis Alternative School
## Terrebonne Parish
## Houma, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Overage 7th & 8th graders
At-risk students grades 9-12
Dropouts

### Community Description/School Context

Houma, Louisiana is one of the several communities that comprise Terrebonne Parish. Located about seventy-five miles southwest of New Orleans, the parish claims approximately 120,000 inhabitants.

Four high schools in the parish funnel students into the Genesis Alternative School Program. This year, 193 students from every part of Terrebonne Parish attended the Genesis Program. Of those students, 65 percent were White non-Hispanic, 22 percent were Black, 2 percent were Hispanic, 2 percent were Asian, and approximately 5 percent were of other ethnic origins. Approximately 60 percent of the students enrolled in the Genesis Program come from families of low socio-economic status. Deteriorating oil and sugar cane industries, along with income generated from fishing and other small businesses, create the economic picture for this area.

### Program Description

The Genesis Program was developed and implemented in 1986 in response to a large and increasing high school dropout rate. At that time, it was estimated that the dropout rate fluctuated between 40 percent and 60 percent. This alarming statistic prompted the organization of small dropout prevention efforts on each of the four high school campuses. Realizing that these efforts were valuable but not sufficient to address the dropout problem, the school board appealed to the Department of Labor for Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funding and established the Genesis Program. In 1991, after four progressively successful years of operation, the Genesis Program was cited by the Louisiana Department of Labor as one of the top three dropout prevention and recovery programs in the state.

Genesis is an alternative school that offers an educational program to students who are experiencing difficulty on the traditional school campus or who have exited the mainstream educational program. Students, including those from private schools, are

informally referred to the program by their counselors, teachers, and parents. Students who have dropped out of the traditional academic setting usually hear about the new options available to them "through the grapevine" and call for information. Many of the students have problems related to drug or alcohol abuse. Currently there is a waiting list of about 150 students, though students are selected based on need rather than position on the waiting list.

Genesis offers two programs for students. Students may either enroll in the regular high school program or work to fulfill GED requirements. As part of their program, students may also take vocational training on campus at Genesis or off campus at the Vocational High School. Because of this, students may attend classes at Genesis for a half day and the rest of the day at the Vocational High School. Some of the vocational training courses offered on campus include carpentry, home economics, and business subjects, while automotive mechanics, drafting, electronics, welding, and food and health services are offered off campus.

By communicating with other states, the school board in Terrebonne Parish and the JTPA Service Delivery Area education staff have discovered new ways of delivering education programs to the "hard to serve." Much of the instruction is reinforced through computer-assisted programs. Even though the emphasis in classroom instruction is multi-sensory with attention to skill reinforcement, consistent encouragement in regard to learner attitude and motivation is foremost.

In addition to the academic and vocational components of this program there is a "life skills management" component that teaches the basic concepts of consumer education, nutrition, and planning and preparation of simple family meals. Expectations about marriage, parenting, child care, and child development are also topics covered.

Staff members recognize that students who feel safe and comfortable in school are more likely to stay in school. Staff members are flexible and can make adjustments when students have sick children, problem pregnancies, or are experiencing emotional turmoil that may temporarily overwhelm them. Attention is given to the emotional and social need of these students. A full time school counselor as well as a psychologist paid through JTPA who is available several times a week. Alcoholic Anonymous meetings, AlAnon meetings, and other focus groups are also offered for those students who may benefit from them.

Data reflect that enrollment increased from 65 students in 1987-88 to 190 in 1991-92, with a total of 101 students earning a GED and 76 students completing Carnegie units for a high school diploma from 1987 to 1992. In 1991-92, Genesis terminated 73 students who showed at least one year progress on a California Achievement Test evaluation or who graduated with a GED or a Carnegie diploma. Also in 1991-92, an appreciable number of the students were required to take the Louisiana Educational Assessment for the first time.

Because the average school scores were below the average Parish scores, efforts to implement a readiness program to improve future scores have been initiated.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Job Training Partnership Act (70% of the program's funding)
- Minimum Foundation Program (state) funds
- Local funds

### Staffing and staff development

The staff at Genesis consists of one principal, one guidance counselor, three English/reading instructors, one industrial arts instructor, one social science instructor, one home economics instructor, one science instructor, and one business/physical education instructor. Staff development is provided as needed by five curriculum specialists available from the parish (district) offices.

## Program Contacts

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## Achievement by Design
## The Assumption Middle Magnet School
## Assumption Parish
## Napoleonville, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Students who have been retained twice, ages 12-16

### Community Description/School Context

Assumption Parish is predominantly rural, with a population of 23,000. Eight little villes or villages are included in the parish, which is governed by Napoleonville. Over forty percent of parish households have annual incomes of less than $15,000, and 60 percent of the citizens are unemployed, with many receiving federal assistance. While 43 percent of the state population does not have a GED or high school diploma, 62 percent of Assumption Parish adults over age 25 have not finished high school and more than 17 percent have less than five years of schooling. These statistics led administrators and staff to develop the Achievement by Design program at the Assumption Parish Middle Magnet School.

Assumption Parish has eleven schools: four elementary schools, five middle schools, and one high school. It has no Head Start program, no public transportation, no private tutoring centers, and few family counseling centers. The economy formerly was centered around the oil industry, but now the sugar cane crop and some small businesses provide the few jobs. The community is declining economically. Most of the families receive federal assistance.

### Program Description

In 1989, a study of the parish's schools indicated that out of an enrollment of nearly 5,000 students, 310 children in grades 4-7 had been retained *at least twice*. Students who have been retained twice in school have as much as a 90 percent chance of dropping out before successful completion of high school. The principal of Assumption Parish's Middle Magnet School campaigned for an alternative approach to reach the at-risk students in the parish. A multi-faceted "school within a school" model serving the entire parish was designed by teachers, staff, and an elementary principal, to serve 100 of these retained students for the 1990-91 school year. Students at the new "school within a school" range in age from 12 to 16, and have been retained at least twice. Of these students, 68 percent

receive free or reduced lunch, 95 percent are from low-income families, 47 percent are Black, and 53 percent are White non-Hispanic. Over two-thirds of the students are male.

Initial program successes are well documented. After half a school year, the students demonstrated tremendous academic growth, as evident from comparisons of their achievement scores from the previous year. For 76 students who had taken the California Achievement Test in both the Spring of 1990 and in January of 1991, their scores indicated an overall average gain of 1.1 years, with gains ranging up to 4.1 years.

Assumption Parish Middle Magnet School shares gym, cafeteria, and library facilities with Napoleonville Middle School, but has its own staff, instructional program, and separate building. One hundred students volunteered for the new Assumption Parish Middle Magnet School, which opened on the campus of Napoleonville Middle School for the 1990-91 school year. Each year, all middle schools in the parish are surveyed to locate new students to fill spaces for the following year. Special education students are not eligible for this program.

Students who are not functioning successfully in the regular classroom may be referred to the Magnet program by a classroom teacher, a guidance counselor, the student, or a parent. Prior to enrollment, a conference is held with the principal, the parents, and the student. An overview of program goals is discussed, and the student's records are reviewed. The parents and student sign a "contract" with the school, agreeing to a sincere effort toward academics, homework, and attendance. The student's contract includes a requirement that is a key element to the program's success: "I must respect my self, my classmates, and all adults." Families agree to stay with the program for at least a year.

An Advisory Council, composed of the principal, a teacher representative, a student, a parent, the guidance counselor, and a community member assists in goal setting, policy making, and formative evaluation for the program. Minimum student competency levels are determined by the teaching team, and high standards and expectations of achievement are the rule. The school board has received waivers related to state requirements to allow greater flexibility in scheduling and instruction to better address individual student needs. Instruction is diagnostic and prescriptive to address deficiencies and to capitalize on individual student strengths. The magnet program offers "accelerated remediation" in basic skills and pre-vocational exploration, along with health and physical education. Besides the core curriculum, the pre-vocational component assists students in achieving mastery of the basics in math and language arts through the computer-based program, *Basic Academic Skills for Employment*.

Each student has an Individual Learning Plan based on standardized tests, information from the cumulative record, and interviews with parents and the student. Along with the student's advisor, parents and the student evaluate progress and set new learning goals

each semester. This systematic focus on individual student progress is the source of the program's name, as student achievement is by design.

Group counseling and individual support for students' development of positive attitudes and improved self-concepts is provided by a full-time counselor. To promote leadership opportunities and enhance self-esteem, each student is encouraged to participate in a community project of their own choosing, such as "adopting" a small garden or park area or making anti-drug posters for the primary schools. To build a sense of community and caring, a day-long retreat is held for students, parents, teachers, and staff at the very beginning of the year. This same community gathers together at the end of the year to recognize the effort and dedication of students, parents, and teachers.

As an incentive for increased academic effort, if the staff decides that the student has "made up" deficiencies in mathematics and reading, and is able to achieve minimum competencies at the end of seventh grade, students can enter high school without a year in eighth grade. This is a great incentive for the students and is made possible through the flexibility in scheduling and the intensive instruction in weak areas. The instructional program extends through June to further ensure the students' opportunities to move ahead.

Parent participation is strongly encouraged through an extensive program designed and maintained by a Parent Coordinator. A special "parents room" is used for small discussion groups and workshops dealing with effective parenting skills and other issues.

Evaluation of the magnet project addresses mastery of academic skills, measurement of self-esteem, program review, individual student progress, graduation rates, attendance, and parental involvement. Some of the students have "jumped" as many as four grade levels, which has served as a tremendous personal incentive. Plans are in the works to develop a support program at the high school level to increase the success rate of students once they enter high school.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

During the summer of 1991, the Assumption Parish Middle Magnet School staff received a substantial grant from the U.S. Department of Education: over $81,000 per year for a three-year period. The program ranked eight out of over 600 applicants for the grant, and the funds were awarded to support their experimental magnet school.

**Sources of funding**

- State and local revenues

- Job Training Partnership Act Funding
- FIRST Schools and Teachers Program, federally authorized through the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, $81,208.00 per year for three years.

**Staffing and staff development**

- Site Administrator/Principal
- Guidance Counselor
- Parent Coordinator (active community member)
- Teaching Team — 9 full-time teachers, selected for their interest in children and willingness to contribute extra time and effort
- Lead trainer (responsible for professional development of teachers) who works in partnership with Louisiana State University

All members of the AMMS received initial training in the application of student learning styles, individual teaching styles, student motivation, values education, computer-aided instruction, techniques to help students develop self-control, and conflict resolution. This training was conducted by the JTPA coordinator and a Louisiana State University faculty member in a retreat setting. In addition, principals in the parish's schools receive staff development in how to identify students who are at-risk for school failure.

**Program Contacts**

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Mr. Ed Cancienne, Superintendent 504/369-7251

Assumption Middle Magnet School
Assumption Parish
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# The Middle Lab School
# A Plan for Fostering Success for At-risk Students
# Natchitoches Parish
# Natchitoches, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Middle School students grades 6-8
Slower learners
Economically disadvantaged youth

## Community Description/School Context

Natchitoches, Louisiana is a medium-sized community thriving on the banks of the Cane River. Approximately 18,000 people live and work in Natchitoches in a variety of businesses and industries. The largest employers in the area are a large poultry processing plant, numerous lumber related businesses, and Northwestern State University (NSU).

This economically diverse community has an ethnic balance of approximately 50 percent Black and 50 percent White non-Hispanic residents. The relationship between the community and school is described as strong and involved. This relationship is intensified through the partnership with the middle school and the university.

## Program Description

The Middle Lab School serves as an example of a partnership between a public school and an institute of higher education. The Department of Education at Northwestern State University (NSU) contracts with this school to provide innovative educational strategies and methods through in-service workshops and individual work with the teachers in their classrooms. In exchange, the university uses the school for their teachers-in-training to observe and practice techniques necessary to their professional development.

The U.S. Department of Education has honored this school twice in the past four years as one of the schools in the national Secondary Schools Recognition Program. This selection is based on the school's innovative approaches, high test scores, and school climate.

Natchitoches Middle Lab School had its beginnings in 1975, when the staff and principal of the school began to discuss the plight of students who did not seem to fall in any "special" category: students who were not achieving to their potential, students who

were slower learners, and students who were economically disadvantaged. The decision was made to create an environment that made all students *want* to come to school and feel positive about participating in their own education. From those discussions, a mutually beneficial relationship was established between the middle school and the university to create a "laboratory" environment of excellence: The Natchitoches Middle Lab School.

The student enrollment is about 200 students, of whom 64 percent are White and 36 percent are Black. Twenty-five percent of the students receive free lunches, however, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is greater than 50 percent.

Students and their parents request enrollment and pay $400 per year to attend. Fifteen percent of the 200 "seats" at the school are "fee waived," and a sliding scale fee is available for economically disadvantaged students. Students are formally assessed with the California Achievement Test in grades 6 and 8, and the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) test in grade 7.

Interdisciplinary team teaching is the innovative approach to curriculum delivery. Teachers collaborate, pooling subject matter, encouraging group work and cooperative learning. The school year is filled with many special events and units of study that incorporate all disciplines.

An example of one of these special events is the annual Medieval Fair. Students prepare for this fair and competition for weeks by studying the history and art of medieval times. Through a cooperative effort from all students and teachers, they recreate the activities, games, costumes, food, music, dance, and art of that period. The disciplines of history, world geography, science, Greek history, physical education, art, and English literature are all explored and studied.

The only aspect that resembles traditional structure in this school is the eight class periods of 45 minutes each per day. No classroom interruptions are allowed. Students receive special and individualized assistance all day. The importance of the fine arts is stressed at the school. All students take art, and a concerted effort is made to demonstrate the relationships between art and other disciplines. The eighth period of the day can be utilized for additional academic assistance as necessary. Students may choose to participate in intramural games or club activities in the afternoon.

Discipline problems are minimal, however, when they do occur students are placed in a restricted study hall and denied participation in school activities. This method of dealing with problems has become a great deterrent to recurring problems.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Student tuition
- Minimum Foundation Program
- Local funds
- Stipends for teachers provided through Northwestern State University

### Staffing and staff development

The faculty and staff of the Middle Lab School is comprised of a principal, grade level counselors and approximately 12 teachers.

The faculty meets twice per semester in "development meetings" to discuss the progress of their students and make adjustments and additions to their teaching methodology. Additionally, NSU faculty provide in-service training at specially scheduled times throughout the school year.

## Program Contacts

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Northwestern State University

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# Operation Rescue
# Crescent Elementary/Junior High School
# Iberville Parish
# Plaquemine, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Potential dropouts
Economically disadvantaged, grades K-8

## Community Description/School Context

Crescent Elementary/Junior High School is located about 6 miles outside of Plaquemine, Louisiana. This remote K-8 school serves children who live along the intercoastal canal from Bayou Pigeon to Bayou Sorrel. The predominantly White families in these tiny communities make their living primarily from hunting and fishing. Located at the spillway of the Atchafalaya Swamp, fishing, hunting, and fur trapping have provided a moderate income for these rural inhabitants for decades. In the city of Plaquemine, Dow Chemical and Georgia Gulf add to the success of the economy. Children from these two contrasting cultures are served by the Crescent Elementary/Junior High School.

The enrollment of Crescent School is approximately 835 students. Of these, 69 percent are White non-Hispanic, and 30 percent are Black; less than 1 percent are Hispanic or Native American. Seventy percent of the students receive free lunches.

## Program Description

Operation Rescue is an example of an innovative, nontraditional approach to providing educational services for rural at-risk students. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has recognized Operation Rescue as an exemplary program in dropout prevention. Additionally, the program received a certificate of appreciation from the U.S. Department of Labor for their participation in the 1990 LIFT America Award.

Operation Rescue is in the Iberville Parish School System. The 1991-92 school year is the third full year of operation for this exemplary alternative program with 17 students. Students are referred to the program if they have been unable to meet promotional requirements, or for a variety of other reasons:

- a score below 35% on the parish norm-referenced test
- unable to complete assignments independently
- poor attendance

- older than other students at the same grade level
- failure in school (retention of 2 or more years)
- previous interventions have proven unsuccessful
- parent or student request
- history of discipline referrals

The academic environment provides for low pupil-teacher ratio, individualized instruction, cooperative learning, daily individual counseling, and an emphasis on a multi-media approach to curriculum delivery. Classes are self-contained, with 15-20 students. The core curriculum spans the content areas of reading, language, mathematics, social studies, and science. Activities and projects that enhance the students' sense of community awareness and self-esteem are an integral part of the program offerings. Self-concept activities are based on the Twelve Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Students also may attend Westside Vocational School to begin skilled craft training in the areas of welding, mechanics, electronics, computer science, and office occupations.

The students participating in Operation Rescue are evaluated in a multitude of ways. They are evaluated daily on assigned tasks, class participation, computer assignments, interaction in class discussions, and class projects. Students are tested weekly on material presented and must achieve at least 80 percent accuracy on all assignments and tests. The California Achievement Test (CAT), Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP), and the test required by the Job Training Partnership Program are administered at the beginning of the year in August as a pre-test and again in May as a post-test to measure student progress.

Students are allowed to work at their own pace and their learning is maximized through an individualized educational plan based on specific skill deficits. This flexibility makes it possible for overage students to receive a double or triple promotion. They have several options to complete the program, including receiving a diploma, obtaining a GED, attending a vocational-technical program, or staying longer at the school.

Students are also expected to contribute at least 30 community service hours each year. Projects may include tutoring younger students, working in the school office, or group projects.

School records indicate a decrease in absenteeism rates, in the number of suspensions, and in the number of office referrals. All 5 of the students who were required to take the LEAP for graduation performed satisfactorily. In 1990-91, CAT scores indicates that in reading, mathematics, and language arts, 64 percent of the Program students scored above the 9th grade level and that 73 percent of the students scored at least at the 8th grade level in the battery results. In 1991-92, CAT results were compared to the previous year with the

following conclusions: the average gain in percentage points per student was 4.3 percent in reading, 8.4 percent in language arts, 10.9 percent in mathematics, and 8.75 percent in total battery. In comparison between Program students and regular 8th graders, Program students have demonstrated more progress than the regular 8th graders consistently.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Job Training Partnership Act Funding (JTPA)
- Minimum Foundation Funds
- In-kind contributions

### Staff and staff development

Operation Rescue has one full-time teacher and one full time teacher's aide. Many volunteers are utilized from businesses and industries in Plaquemine to provide special programs for the students relating to the world of work.

The teacher and teacher's aide receive 5 days of staff development before the school year begins, and other days periodically during the year, on topics such as enhancing and building positive self-esteem in students, teaching styles, learning styles, student team training, and vocational training.

## Program Contacts

Nancy Aguillard, Teacher
Ruby Daigle, Teacher
O.E. Watts, Jr., Principal

Crescent Elementary/Junior High School
Operation Rescue
Iberville Parish
P. O. Box 151
Plaquemine, LA 70764-0151

504/659-2437

## Family Service Center
## West Feliciana Parish
## St. Francisville, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** All children from birth to 21 years of age are defined as being at-risk in this parish

### Community Description/School Context

West Feliciana Parish is a rural parish located approximately 35 miles north of Baton Rouge along the Mississippi River. The parish is home for about 12,000 people. The economy revolves around agriculture-related businesses, a prison, a large paper plant, and the Riverbend Nuclear Plant.

The school system is administered from St. Francisville and provides services for approximately 2,000 students. There are four schools in the parish: three elementary schools serving an enrollment of 1200 students ranging from pre-K through 6th grade, and a consolidated junior high/high school with an enrollment of over 800 students in the 7th-12th grades. Ninety-eight percent of the students are bused to their schools, some for as long as an hour and a half. About 52 percent are White non-Hispanic and 48 percent of the students are Black.

Of the sixty-four parishes in the state of Louisiana, West Feliciana ranks sixtieth in per capita income. Unemployment looms at 10.1 percent. Seventy-five percent of the students receive free lunch and approximately 30 percent are from very low socio-economic conditions. The administrators of the school system have defined all children in the parish as at-risk.

### Program Description

The Family Service Center serves as an example of a school and community partnership that was formed to address the needs of rural at-risk students. Prior to the development of the Family Service Center, health and mental health services were not accessible to many students and their families due to lack of transportation. Health and mental health professionals were available, but their services were not being used. Based on the belief that children's physical and emotional well-being are essential before they can come to school ready to learn, school administrators collaborated with representatives of the Office of Mental Health and of the Office of Public Health to develop the Family Service Center, and dedicated space for it in a new school.

Locating community human services providers in a school dramatically increased families' access to services. In addition, school officials feel that familiarity with "faces and places" has increased parental involvement, as parents seem more comfortable when coming to the school for activities.

Last year more than 350 students ages 0-21 years received services from the Family Service Center. Services address student needs in the areas of school readiness, parent education, parental involvement, health and social services, and student progress in physical, social, emotional, or cognitive development. Services also are extended to pregnant mothers for prenatal care and to their babies from birth until they are 21 years old. All services are provided in an ongoing manner to address the needs of the whole child, and developmentally appropriate activities are culturally sensitive and address the primary language of the children and their families.

Students are referred to the Family Service Center by parents and teachers. Principals receive the referrals and send them to the Family Service Center. Staffings for the students receiving mental health services are held on Fridays. Services are family-focused. Parents are involved in decision-making, and the program is administered within the community. Parents serve on the board of directors and influence the program.

The Family Service Center provides the following services:

- A teen parent program at the high school provides a nurturing program that addresses needs such as parenting skills and counseling. A part-time therapist runs groups sessions during school time on a weekly basis.

- The parish's Even Start program is located at the center. In addition, early intervention services are provided to infants and toddlers ages 0-3 years with special needs. An early interventionist goes to the children's homes to assist the children's development through family support and educational instruction. The children also come to the center once a week for group language and cognitive development activities.

- The KIDMED program provides medical screening and assistance at the center. Children are referred to the program through the school nurse to the Family Services Center nurse. A pediatrician provides services at the center once a month. In addition, children participating in the High Risk Clinic receive follow-up screening. The High Risk Clinic is provided through a special agreement between the local public health unit, the Earl K. Long Hospital, and the Louisiana State University Medical Center. Babies who are screened at birth and determined to be at-risk are referred to the High Risk Clinic for special follow-up. These clinics are provided at the Family Service Center by a nurse from the local public health unit and medical staff from Earl K. Long Hospital.

- Two programs focused on increasing self-esteem are available to students: Positive Action (Grades K-6), and Quest (Grades 7-8). Staff members report that since the programs have begun, the students are demonstrating positive attitudes and the discipline referral rates have decreased. Activities for these programs are conducted by the regular education teachers on a daily basis, but all school employees and parents participate in this program.

The Comprehensive Health Program has had a dramatic impact on student achievement. For grades 1 - 9, the percent of students scoring above the national median on the N. R. T. increased in both mathematics and reading. In mathematics the increase was 43.4 in 1990 to 54.0 in 1992, while the percent of students in reading increased from 36.3 in 1990 to 45.9 in 1992.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- State Minimum Foundation Program Funds
- Job Training Partnership Act Funds (JTPA) (where applicable)
- Drug Free Schools Funding
- Medicaid funds (including Medicaid matching funds)
- Local funds
- Grants

**Staffing and staff development**

The West Feliciana Parish provides administrative assistance to the program through the Supervisor of Special Education, and through an on-site program coordinator. Through the interagency agreement, the Office of Public Health provides a public health nurse, and the Office of Mental Health provides (through a contract with a private provider) a family therapist, a part-time substance abuse counselor, and a part-time psychiatrist. Staff development includes interagency cross-training to foster collaboration.

**Program Contacts**

Nancy Dreher, Supervisor Special Education Services
Sue Catchings, Teacher and Program Developer
504/635-3891

Eileen Sonnier, Family Service Center Director
504/635-5299

West Feliciana Parish
P. O. Box 1910
St. Francisville, LA 70775

## BESI Lab
## Gibsland-Coleman High School
## Bienville Parish
## Gibsland, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Students who have been identified as at risk, ages 14-21

### Community Description/School Context

Gibsland, Louisiana, is a predominantly poor, Black (98 percent), rural community of approximately 1,200 people. It is located about 50 miles from Shreveport and 55 miles from Monroe. The economy is based primarily on the lumber industry.

The school has a high percentage of students from low-socioeconomic-level homes. Of the 350 students enrolled, 98 percent participate in a free or reduced lunch program. There have traditionally been high percentages of students who perform below grade level in one or more subject areas, and who fail the state exit examination (LEAP). To improve these statistics the Bienville Parish School Board applied for and received Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funding.

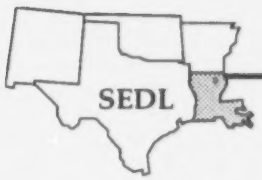
### Program Description

The Basic Educational Skills Improvement Lab (BESI Lab) was initiated by the Bienville Parish School Board in March 1990 with the JTPA grant. The BESI Lab is designed with the flexibility necessary to address the diverse needs of the school's at-risk students.

BESI consists of sixteen computer stations and computer-managed instructional materials designed to improve student performance in math, reading, and language arts. The multimedia design of computer-assisted and other instructional materials/equipment allows teachers to diagnose and evaluate student performance.

The key components of the program are:

- measurable objectives
- competency-based instruction
- diagnostic-prescriptive learning
- hands-on, self-paced, individual instruction
- required mastery of individualized skills
- increased time on instructional task
- text correlated to standardized test objectives
- text correlated to State Exit Exam (LEAP)




- reading materials correlated to Houghton Mifflin basal (used in Bienville Parish)

To participate in the program, students must be at least 14 years old, have failed at least one grade, be performing below grade level in one or more basic skill areas (reading, language arts, math), be economically and/or academically disadvantaged, be from single parent households, be members of an ethnic minority, be juvenile offenders, and/or have attendance problems. Currently 40 students (38 Black and 2 White non hispanic) are served in the program.

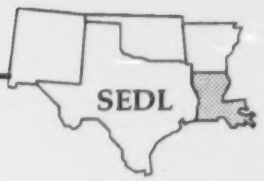
When students are weak in a particular academic area, the BESI Lab reinforces the classroom curriculum through enhancing basic academic skills via computer-assisted instruction (CAI). Parents in the community have been supportive of the program. Although the program is designed for at-risk students, many parents have expressed a desire for *all* students to benefit from the lab.

At the end of the first full year of service, the performance of students in grades seven, ten, eleven, and twelve were evaluated using the LEAP tests. A comparison of the 1991 LEAP scores of those students with the 1990 LEAP scores showed that *all* students in the program passed either the entire exam or passed the subject area(s) they had previously failed (for those not required to take the entire test). California Achievement Test scores were also used to evaluate students participating in the BESI program. The following are the results of 32 students who participated in the BESI program and who took the tests:

- 19 of the 32 students improved in reading
- 20 of the 32 students improved in math
- 19 of the 32 students improved in language arts
- 28 of the 32 students improved in at least one subject area
- 20 of the 32 students improved in two or more subject areas
- 4 of the students showed no improvement in any subject area

BESI was designed and implemented as a complete CAI package that includes hardware, software, in-service training, support furniture, etc. Consultant/grant-writing services are provided by the BESI vendor at no charge. Special equipment is required for implementation of the program, which includes the off-line instrumentation. This equipment and other services are made available through the vendor.

The Bienville Parish BESI Lab has had a number of special recognitions. The program was highlighted by the Department of Labor in a film titled Partners in Progress. BESI was also featured on the Family Channel (a cable television network) in September 1991, on a program called Tools for Schools. (Tapes of both are available.) School personnel presented the program at the Louisiana State Conference for At-Risk Students in March 1993. And Mrs. Alyce Strickland, the BESI teacher, was named the Bienville Parish Teacher of the Year.




Long-term plans for BESI will involve the community at large by offering computer-assisted instruction to dropouts, parents, and juvenile offenders.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

In March 1990, the Bienville Parish received a JTPA grant for $27,321 and $500 from the parish school board. These funds covered the cost of materials ($3,000) and the teacher's salary. In January 1993, Bienville Parish was a finalist for 8(g) Block Grant Exemplary Status.

**Sources of funding**

- Job Training Partnership Act Grant
- Bienville Parish School Board

**Staffing and staff development**

- One teacher

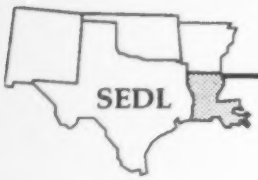
Initiation of BESI begins with in-service training with the following purposes:

- introduce and acquaint instructor with hardware/computer literacy skills and off-line materials and equipment
- acquaint instructor with software modules
- provide printed materials, manuals, pre-, post-, and mastery tests
- acquaint instructor with methodology for introduction of participants into system through correlation to standardized test scores
- familiarize instructor with the record management system

**Program Contact**

Alyce Strickland, Teacher 318/843-6247
Gibsland-Coleman High School
P.O. Box 70
Gibsland, LA .71028

This program has changed and will be updated in early 1994.




# Project HOPE
# Church Point Elementary
# Acadia Parish
# Church Point, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** K-3 at-risk students

## Community Description/School Context

Church Point is a rural community of approximately 4,720 people, located about 25 miles from Lafayette, Louisiana. The jobless rate is high. Most of the jobs are in oil-related industries, but approximately 60 percent of the population receives government assistance. More than 87 percent of the students at Church Point Elementary School participate in a free or reduced lunch program.

Church Point Elementary houses 740 students in prekindergarten through grade four. Fifty-one percent of the students are White non-Hispanic; 48.6 percent are Black. The community is very supportive of the school. Many local businesses have adopted Church Point Elementary as "partners" and are present at various school functions. Parents, school staff, and other community members worked together to pass a bond issue that will fund a new $4.2 million school, to be built in early 1994.

## Program Description

In 1991 Project HOPE (Helping Our Pupils Excel) was started to address the needs of students who have failed in their first four years of schooling. It was designed to give primary-age students a second chance at mastering skills and to eliminate the labels "failure" and "at-risk." In the spring of 1991 the California Achievement Test (CAT) was administered. The results serve as baseline data to help assess the project's future impact. The following charts show the distribution of scores.

**CAT Scores for All Students in Grades K through 3**

| Grade | No. of Students | Reading Percentiles | | | | Math Percentiles | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76-99 | 1-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76-99 |
| K | 148 | 47 | 29 | 20 | 42 | 47 | 33 | 29 | 22 |
| 1 | 131 | 22 | 34 | 35 | 18 | 26 | 25 | 38 | 37 |
| 2 | 161 | 48 | 55 | 27 | 25 | 13 | 29 | 57 | 49 |
| 3 | 114 | 33 | 44 | 18 | 12 | 29 | 35 | 24 | 16 |

NOTE: The sum of the reading or math percentiles will not equal the number in the corresponding "No. of Students" column. This column reflects the total number of students enrolled rather than the number of students who participated in the taking of test components.



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**CAT Scores for Students Repeating a Grade in Grades K through 3**

| Grade | No. of Students | Reading Percentiles | | | | Math Percentiles | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76-99 | 1-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76-99 |
| K | 6 | 5 | 1 | | | 5 | 1 | | |
| 1 | 11 | 11 | | | | 9 | 1 | 1 | |
| 2 | 6 | 6 | | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| 3 | 5 | 5 | | | | 3 | | 2 | |

Sixty-two students (41 Black, 21 White non-Hispanic) were identified to participate in Project HOPE from previous CAT scores (1st to 25th percentiles in reading and/or mathematics) and from grade retention records. Project HOPE is a pull-out program giving students two hours of instruction each week (20 minutes for kindergarten students) in small groups led by a teacher and a teacher aide. The program uses multisensory learning techniques and computer-aided instruction to raise math and reading proficiencies, to develop study skills, and to foster self-esteem and leadership skills. The curriculum complements that of the classroom, augmenting instruction by catering to the full range of learning styles. The Project HOPE teacher and teacher aide use math manipulatives, oral language activities, and a computer mini-lab. The mini-lab includes six computers with three speech adapters, four printers, specialized software, four tape recorders, and a videocassette recorder.

Parental involvement is an important element of Project HOPE. Transportation is offered to parents so that they may observe their children at work. Parents are encouraged to participate in computer-assisted lessons, and lap-top computers can be taken home so that parents can work with students there. Parents also receive weekly conduct reports on student behavior. Project personnel indicate that the need to report negative student behaviors has decreased as the project has progressed. Further, school attendance for these at-risk students has increased from an average of 50 percent before participating in the project to 90 percent currently.

The Project HOPE teacher and teacher aide exchange information with classroom teachers regarding each child's academic progress. A guidance counselor also works closely with students to promote self-worth and good study habits.

The success of Project HOPE will be assessed through gathering information from multiple sources. The California Achievement Test (CAT) will be used to monitor students' academic progress. Parents will complete a survey at the end of the year to indicate their impressions of the success of the program. Student and parent comments are being kept on file. School attendance and discipline records will also continue to be monitored.

A third grant has been written in order to continue the program. The Acadia Parish School Board gave special recognition to Project HOPE at its February 1993 meeting. A presentation of the program was delivered at the Louisiana At-Risk Conference in March 1993.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

In 1991 Church Point received a grant for $19,530 from the state. A second grant was awarded in 1992 for $20,493.

**Sources of funding**

- State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Louisiana Quality Education Fund

**Staffing and staff development**

- Classroom teacher
- Teacher aide
- Guidance counselor
- Paraprofessional

Schoolwide staff development is ongoing. All teachers, counselors and administrators participate in sessions on oral language, cooperative learning, development of thinking skills, and uses of technology.

**Program Contact**

Sandra Doquet, Principal
Church Point Elementary
415 Lougarre
Church Point, LA 70525

318/684-5722

# Safety Net
# West Feliciana Parish
# St. Francisville, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** All children

## Community Description/School Context

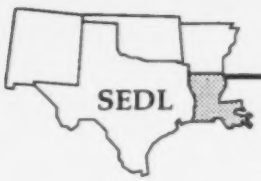
West Feliciana Parish is a rural parish located approximately 35 miles north of Baton Rouge along the Mississippi River. The parish is home for about 12,000 people. The economy revolves around agriculture-related businesses, a prison, a large paper plant, and the Riverbend Nuclear Plant.

The school system is administered from St. Francisville and provides services for approximately 2,200 students. There are four schools in the parish: three elementary schools serving an enrollment of 1,200 students, ranging from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, and a consolidated junior high/high school with an enrollment of more than 800 students in the seventh through twelfth grades. Ninety-eight percent of the students are bused to and from their schools; for some the ride is as long as an hour and a half each way. About 52 percent are White non-Hispanic and 48 percent are Black.

Of the sixty-four parishes in the state of Louisiana, West Feliciana ranks sixtieth in per capita income. Unemployment looms at 10.1 percent. Fifty-five percent of the students receive free or reduced lunches, and approximately 30 percent come from very low-socioeconomic level conditions. The administrators of the school system have defined all children in the parish as at risk.

## Program Description

In 1989, teachers, parents, administrators, community leaders, and school board members outlined a parish plan. Their mission statement declared: "As part of our restructuring and enhancement of service models, all students are valued and respected, and it is expected that *all children can and will learn.*" Each school in the parish became involved in developing and delivering programs that fit the needs of all students. An array of services identify vulnerable families and students and provide a "safety net" for them. All students will have their needs addressed; thus the success of the school is assured, and the need for corrective or remedial efforts later on is reduced.




Safety Net is different from traditional school philosophies in that it is oriented toward prevention, intervention, and direct physical health, self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy programs. In addition, curriculum realignment assures appropriate cognitive (academic) programs at all levels for *all* students. The focus is on child advocacy and preventive early intervention. Crisis management is planned and anticipatory rather than reaction-driven.

A comprehensive health program is an important component of Safety Net. Coordinated from the central office, curriculum adaptations and integration of health concepts are offered across the curriculum. Direct health services are available through the Family Service Center, which coordinates federal, state, and local funding sources to provide an array of services for children and families. These include health services, mental health services, Even Start program, Child Search, CHILDNET, occupational and physical therapy, Governor's Drug Free Schools Grant, and the school nurse program. For more information on the Family Service Center, see page LA 24 of this directory.

Because of West Feliciana Parish's focus on the *total* child, other agencies collaborate with the school through interagency agreements, bringing services at no cost onto the school site. The Office of Public Health, the offices of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and the Louisiana State University College of Education are involved. Within the 1992-93 school year, the Louisiana State University and Tulane medical schools will begin providing personnel to the parish.

In West Feliciana Parish, Chapter I and special education students are integrated into regular classrooms. Special education professionals serve as consultants to aid classroom teachers in meeting the needs of *all* students. Discipline is maintained through schoolwide discipline programs. Training is geared to developing and maintaining students in their classrooms through "positive action" interventions and case-specific strategies to limit suspensions and expulsions. Counseling and in-house alternatives are proactive and aim to prevent recurrence and increase the students' locus of control, enabling them to assume more autonomy and responsibility while phasing out of support.

Since the Safety Net program, the parish has seen a 23 percent decrease in the number of identified special education students and a 50 percent decrease in the number of discipline referrals to the principal in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. All elementary-level regular-class students passed the LEAP test (state-mandated testing) and 97 percent of the special education students were promoted to the next grade. In 1990, 36.3 percent of the first through ninth grade students scored above the national median in reading. In 1992, 45.9 percent scored above the national median. And in mathematics 43.4 percent of the students in the first through ninth grades scored above the national median in 1990. In 1992 the number who scored above the national median in mathematics jumped to 54 percent.

At various times during the 1992-93 school year, the Safety Net program has been presented to a number of state, national, and international audiences, including the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, the Texas Association of School Administrators, the Louisiana Conference on At-Risk Youth, the Association for Rural Special Education, and the Council for Exceptional Children Convention. Two videotapes, The West Feliciana Parish Integrated Project and Acceptance and Impact, describe how the program has integrated special education and Chapter I students into regular-education classrooms. They are both available.

Although the Safety Net program has been developed largely through creative and prioritized funding already being received by the district and through cooperative agreements with various agencies, a two-year grant of $165,000 was awarded by the Bell South Foundation in 1992 to expand and evaluate the program.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- State, local, and federal school funding
- Bell South Foundation

**Staffing and staff development**

Pre-service programs had previously tended to reach only the middle range of a teacher's classroom population. Today, a needs-assessment driven, teacher-friendly staff development program is in place. More teacher input goes into the selection of topics and provision for ongoing support for adoption of new techniques and strategies. In-class demonstrations and coaching are used to translate research and theory into practice. An interagency agreement with the Louisiana State University College of Education establishes Bains Lower Elementary as a professional development center.

**Program Contact**

Nancy Dreher
Supervisor Special Education Services
West Feliciana Parish Schools
P.O. Box 1910
St. Francisville, LA 70775

504/635-3891

# HyperText Folklife Curriculum Project
# Abita Springs Elementary School
# St. Tammany Parish
# Abita Springs, Louisiana

**Target At-risk Population:** Chapter I students

**Community Description/School Context**

Just north of Lake Pontchartrain in St. Tammany Parish, some fifty miles north of New Orleans, is the culturally diverse, rural community of Abita Springs. The town of Abita Springs has a population of 900. The parish population is growing, with 500 Chapter I students from St. Tammany Parish attending Abita Springs Elementary School. The population is approximately 80 percent White non-Hispanic and 20 percent Black. There is also a small Native American representation. Fifty-two percent of the students qualify for a free or reduced lunch program. Most members of the community are semi-professional, skilled laborers.

**Program Description**

In 1987 the HyperText Folklife Curriculum Project was conceived. A grant proposal was submitted to Apple Computer for hardware and software to combine a folklife curriculum with high technology. The goal of the program is to improve students' writing skills, boost their self-esteem, and help them learn to appreciate other cultures. Participating students are selected by classroom teachers using both formal (CAT scores) and informal (teacher reports identifying students who would benefit from participation in the program) assessment.

The core of the HyperText Folklife Curriculum Project is a study of cultures. Students interview local residents for oral histories, record them, and transcribe them on computer. The class also is compiling an electronic folk encyclopedia by constructing HyperCard stacks, a computerized "file-carding" system. Students have developed HyperCard stacks on hunting, basket weaving, alligators, animated folk tales, shrimpers, hurricanes, sharks, and cooking.

Field trips are an important part of the project. Each month the children study one of the many cultures, including French, German, Italian, Afro-American, and Native American, that coexist in the Abita Springs community. For example, students visited an artist-in-residence who specializes in the Choctaw culture. As a culminating activity of each month's cultural study, the class presents a performance about the culture that incorporates drama, singing, and dancing.

In addition to learning about local cultures, students investigate cultures around the world by collaborating via computer with students from different parts of the world. Through the AT&T Learning Circle and Applelink, third and fourth graders have completed projects with students in California, New Mexico, and England.

Student outcomes are documented by writing samples and by videotaping the monthly performances. As a means of documenting the progress of the Equal Time Grant, copies of the videotapes of the performances were sent to Apple Computer. Apple has continued its support of the project for more than four years.

Kathleen Duplantier, Project Director, won the Christa McAuliffe Award from NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. She and her students are scheduled to appear on Teacher TV, via the nationally televised Learning Channel, though the exact time and date have not been extablished at this time. The project has also been highlighted at the Third Annual Conference on At-Risk Youth in Baton Rouge, Louisiana (March 1993).

Abita Springs is currently writing an Apple Leadership Grant to disseminate information on the HyperText Folklife Curriculum Project. Future plans include using Quick Time, a computer application for MacIntosh computers, to import video into the HyperCard stacks, and adding a video editing facility to make training tapes.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Apple Computer
- Louisiana State Division of the Arts
- Sex Equity Grant from Louisiana State Department of Education

**Staffing and staff development**

A State Folklorist from the Louisiana State Department of Education conducted training for teachers. Teachers also attended a two-day 4-Mat Training on learning/teaching styles.

**Program Contact**

Kathleen Duplantier, Project Director 504/892-8184
Abita Springs Elementary School
P.O. Box 427
Abita Springs, LA 70420

## Students Against Violence in Schools (SAVIS)
## H. L. Bourgeois High School
## Gray, Louisiana

**Target At-Risk Population:** All students in the school

### Community Description/School Context

Gray, Louisiana is a rural community of approximately 1500, located 45 miles southwest of New Orleans. The local economy revolves primarily around farming and oil-related industries. Neither of these industries is currently sufficient to create a strong economic base for Gray and the surrounding area.

H. L. Bourgeois High School is a part of the Terrebonne Parish School District and serves 950 students in grades 9-12. Many, if not most, of the students live outside the Gray city limits. Across the Terrebonne Parish School District 44 percent of the school-age children live in families whose income is below the poverty line. The principal of H.L. Bourgeois High School estimates that 30 percent of his students participate in the free/reduced lunch program. The ethnic breakdown of the school is 22 percent African-American and 78 percent White.

### Program Description

Twenty-eight high school students serve as peer mediators in this high school of nearly 1000. They were selected by the principal based upon their influence with their peers. These mediators were also selected to provide a balanced cross-section of the student body. Variables included in the selection process included:

- academic and behavioral characteristics (model students to those at risk)
- gender balance
- ethnic balance
- home geography (mediators do not all live in one section of town)
- activities (band, athletics, student clubs, etc. are represented)

The peer mediators meet on a regular basis (weekly), more often if necessary, during the school day for two purposes. The first purpose is to develop knowledge and understanding about alternative ways to deal with conflict. Presentations by/interactions with various community resource persons have helped to bring an awareness of available

services. Presentations by law enforcement personnel, the district attorney, etc. and a visit to the local jail have also helped to shape a better understand of the workings of the legal system and the consequences of not resolving conflicts early and peaceably.

The second purpose of the mediator meetings is to develop skills to deal with personal conflict and with helping others to resolve and/or manage conflicts. The school principal and a teacher serve as meeting facilitators and sponsors of the peer mediation program. At some of these meetings, problems are discussed. These problems come from TV program scenarios, from simulated circumstances, from news paper articles, from actual problems in the school, etc. The problem is outlined, discussed thoroughly (with students providing input from all perspectives), and alternatives for resolution or management are investigated. From time to time, students with significant conflicts with other students are brought into the mediator meeting in order to address their conflicts. The peer team serves as counselors, support persons, and mediators. These sessions are supervised by the two faculty sponsors and are available for further, more private and/or intensive intervention, as might be warranted.

The peer mediators use this knowledge base and these skills to intervene in their own conflicts at home, school or community. They also actively seek to help their peers to resolve interpersonal conflicts that they have. The mediators are also being used to visit the local middle school to help facilitate a smooth transition into high school from the eighth grade. Because of the diverse backgrounds, interests, etc. of the student mediators, these younger students are more likely to find someone to identify with. They are more open with these mediators and, thereby, have many of their questions, concerns, fears, etc. dealt with prior to actually entering the ninth grade.

One side benefit of the SAVIS program has been with the "at-risk" student mediators—those students who have not excelled in school. Through their participation in the peer mediation program, they have begun to perceive themselves as school leaders. As a result, their attendance, academic progress and school-related behaviors appear to have improved significantly.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The program was developed and implemented with no additional funds, though a grant has been submitted to the Louisiana State Department of Public Health to provide funds to bring in resource persons to help train students. The program has received strong support (in terms of cooperating with and speaking at the mediator training sessions) from the local police, health/human services, judiciary, churches, etc.

**Staffing and staff development**

Two school staff, the principal and a science teacher/coach, serve as the facilitators of the peer mediation team.

**Program Contact**

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H. L. Bourgeois High School
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## Mental Health Providers
## St. Tammany Parish
## Covington, Louisiana

**Target At-Risk Population:** All students in the school district

### Community Description/School Context

St. Tammany Parish is comprised of a number of diverse communities that vary in size from tiny villages to large "bedroom" communities to New Orleans. The parish seat of government and school board administration is in Covington, a town of approximately 27,000, located across Lake Ponchartrain from New Orleans. The economy in this area revolves primarily around farming (vegetables, nurseries, horses, exotic animals—ostriches, llamas, etc.).

Forty-three schools house the approximately 30,500 students enrolled across the parish. The ethnic makeup of these students is about 83 percent White and 16 percent African-American. The remaining 1 percent is comprised of Hispanics, Native Indians and Asians. Nearly 30 percent of the students across St. Tammany Parish participate in the school district's free or reduced lunch program.

### Program Description

St. Tammany Parish currently employs 23 qualified mental health providers to serve the 43 schools that comprise the parish school district. Each school has access to a mental health provider (MHP) for either 5 or 10 hours per week, depending upon the number of identified Chapter 1 students enrolled (24 schools are served 10 hours/week). MHPs are employed for no more than 20 hours/week. They are hired primarily to provide individual, group, or family counseling, and crisis intervention to their respective schools. They also serve as resources to teachers and others to help design programs to modify inappropriate student behaviors.

Because each school's needs differ and because the background, training, and orientation of MHPs vary, a principal selects his/her MHP from a pool of applicants who have undergone an initial screening by central office personnel. In general, the MHPs assist individual students through counseling relationships to better understand themselves. They also help students develop good planning, decision-making and coping strategies to deal with the problems confronting them.

Students are referred to a MHP through the school's Student Assistance Team (SAT), a team of teachers who are available as a resource to teachers and others who might be having difficulty (academic, behavioral, etc.) with various students. The team works with any teacher to identify alternative strategies to help that teacher become more effective with the student in question. At times the SAT may include the services of the MHP in the intervention strategy prescribed for a particular student. In crisis situations, referrals to a MHP may be made directly by a principal or school counselor. Prior to any MHP intervention, except in crisis situations, obtaining the informed consent of parents is required.

The MHP is available to provide individual or group counseling for students with personal/emotional problems. He/she may also work with parents of particular students to facilitate linkages to appropriate social, medical, or psychological services when such services are warranted. This will often require MHPs to maintain a degree of flexibility in their working hours. Indeed, at times MHPs must meet with parents or students after school or in the evening. These meetings are allowed only in school facilities (not private offices). Such evening meetings are with the knowledge and approval of the principal. Further, MHPs are not allowed to see their assigned students or families through their private practices. Rather, if such additional services are deemed necessary, a MHP works to connect their students/families with some other qualified therapist or social worker.

Accountability is maintained through MHPs keeping daily logs of their activities and counseling sessions. These logs are submitted with time sheets monthly. While maintaining appropriate confidentiality, more detailed notes are kept on all students being served. At the end of each school year each MHP submits a brief written report on the progress of each child and of the program as a whole.

One other job responsibility of a MHP is to be available to plan and present workshops for teachers, parents, etc. These workshops are to facilitate awareness of MHP services available to students and to provide workshop participants with additional strategies for helping unique and at-risk students be more successful in school.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The total projected budget for the 1993-1994 school year is $595,420. All funding comes from moneys normally channeled to the district. Specifically, the funding sources are:

- Drug Free Schools (about 20% of the overall budget)
- Special Education (about 30% of the overall budget)

- Chapter I (about 50% of the overall budget)

**Staffing and staff development**

The qualified mental health providers have appropriate certifications (Licensed Professional Counselor and/or Board Certified Social Worker) and backgrounds in social work, psychology, and/or counseling. They also have either a background in education or professional experience working with children. They are contracted to work up to 20 hours per week throughout the school year and report directly to the principal(s) of the school(s) to which they are assigned.

These mental health providers initially receive a traditional orientation to school board policies/procedures, as well as overviews of school procedures, forms, etc. In addition, quarterly follow-up meetings are held to problem-solve and to share experiences.

**Program Contact**

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## Positive Influence
## Rayne High School
## Rayne, Louisiana

**Target At-Risk Population:** All students in the school

### Community Description/School Context

Rayne, Louisiana is a small town in Acadia Parish. It has approximately 8500 residents and is located 25 miles west of Lafayette. Acadia Parish is characterized by significant poverty, with nearly 60 percent of the students parish-wide coming from families living below the poverty level. Farming is the primary economic base of the area.

Rayne High School serves approximately 650 students. Seventy percent of the student body are White, with the remaining 30 percent being African-American. The free/reduced lunch program has a 40 percent participation rate. Also, the principal of Rayne High School estimates that 40 percent of the entire student body could be considered significantly "at risk" (students characterized by low socioeconomic backgrounds, limited English proficiency — "Cajun" French, history of grade/course failure, substance abusers, etc.).

### Program Description

To reduce fights and to enhance self-esteem and school pride, Rayne High School staff and administration have worked to develop a comprehensive approach to provide a safe, orderly environment that fosters a desire to come to school and to excel. These efforts are primarily focused in three arenas: the staff, the campus, and the students.

Staff development is a significant component of this program. Built on a foundation of the five "effective schools" correlates (school leadership characterized by substantial attention to the quality of instruction; a pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus; high expectations for the achievement of all students; a safe, orderly school climate; monitoring/measurement focused significantly on student outcomes/achievement), the school faculty, staff and administration collaborate annually to develop a school improvement plan. An important aspect of these improvement efforts is staff development. In addition to the mandated or traditional staff development sessions (e.g., reporting procedures for child abuse, Section 504 issues, alcohol/ drug abuse prevention, etc.), significant training in cooperative learning strategies, conflict resolution skills,

"discipline with dignity," classroom management, understanding and dealing with different personalities in the classroom, adapting to different student learning styles, etc. have been undertaken. These sessions are strongly focused on instructional issues at the classroom level. The desired outcome is to help a broader range of students become more successful academically.

Positive Influence addresses the campus as a desirable and safe workplace for both students and faculty. Special care is taken to keep the grounds and building well-maintained. The campus has been landscaped to make it more appealing and free from unsafe conditions. Positive signs and posters are displayed in the buildings, both in the hallways and in the classrooms.

A hallmark belief among school personnel is that students must be in school in order to benefit from the educational opportunities available to them. Therefore, getting students to school and keeping them there is a significant component of the Positive Influence program. Strong lines of communication with parents are also encouraged school-wide. The school also enforces a closed campus policy for lunch. A close working relationship with the police and other city officials has been developed to deter possible student crimes and truancy. Also, to keep students in school rather than "kicking out" students for violating school rules, Rayne High School has an in-school suspension program. The principal plans to begin implementing a conflict resolution training program for students who are assigned to the in-school suspension center.

In addition to these more negative or "controlling" aspects to keeping students in school, numerous positive efforts are also being taken.

- Motivational speakers are brought into the school to speak to students regularly (3-4 per semester). These speakers encourage students to have high aspirations for themselves and to strive to achieve their goals—that they can overcome any adversity and make a significant contribution to the world.
- School leadership strives to make the school environment one of care and support. Faculty volunteers are available to give additional assistance to all students before and after school. Teachers are encouraged to modify time-on-task requirements to individual student needs.
- Through the implementation of cooperative learning strategies, students are encouraged to work together in the learning process. It is hoped that encouraging these cooperative arrangements will foster greater peer support, both academically and behaviorally.
- A positive self-esteem curriculum has been developed and implemented for all high school students. This eight-hour program covers such issues as self-awareness, developing a healthy self-concept, managing and coping with stress, goal setting, developing better communication skills, decision-making strategies, drug/alcohol

information (including intervention/treatment resources that are locally available).

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The program is funded through already existing funds allotted to the district, including Drug Free Schools funds.

**Staffing and staff development**

See discussion above.

**Program Contact**

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## Project Lifesaver
## Terrebonne Parish School District
## Houma, Louisiana

**Target At-Risk Population:** Students between ages 10-18 who have been suspended or deemed in need of supervision by the school or the court

### Community Description/School Context

Houma, Louisiana is one of the several communities that comprise Terrebonne Parish. Located about seventy-five miles southwest of New Orleans, the parish claims approximately 120,000 residents. Deteriorating oil and sugar cane industries, along with the income generated from fishing and other small businesses, create the economic picture for this area of Louisiana.

The Terrebonne Parish school district is comprised of 44 schools. Forty-four percent of the students parish-wide live in families who are economically below the poverty line. Sixty-four percent participate in the school's free or reduced lunch program. Further, 43 of the 44 parish schools qualify for additional, "severe need" federal funding for a school breakfast program. The ethnic makeup of the parish school system is 66% White, 24% African-American, 7% Native Indian and 2% Asian.

### Program Description

#### Background

Goal 6 of the "National Goals for Education" states that "by the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning." Terrebonne Parish has established a Goal 6 Committee to facilitate the accomplishment of this goal. The committee is comprised of school personnel from the parish. Ministerial, law enforcement, judicial, and other community representatives also participate on the committee. The committee is chaired by a district judge.

Project Lifesaver is one component of a comprehensive program proposed by the Goal 6 Committee to facilitate making schools safer and more efficient. Other components include:

- Jail Visitation—students in grades 7-12 may visit the parish jail to see what it is like;
- Juvenile Court Judge School Visitations—Juvenile judge holds hearings on

school grounds and is available to speak in classes;
- D.A.R.E.—Drug prevention curriculum taught by police officers;
- Project Charlie/Lions Quest—K-8 curriculum to help students learn how to resolve conflicts and make decisions in healthy ways;
- At-Risk Support Groups—Through community agency facilitators, at-risk students learn coping skills and anger control;
- Early Identification Program—Student assistance program for those in danger of expulsion;
- Drug/Weapon-Free Zones—Signs posted declaring schools and their surrounding areas as drug- and weapon-free zones
- Super Mini Program—Students attending Saturday suspension (Junior High level) are provided instruction in communication, decision making and alcohol/drug education;
- Mentor/Mentee Program—At-risk students are identified and paired with a community business person to develop a mentor/mentee (buddy, support, encouragement) relationship by meeting regularly at school (for lunch, etc.);
- Louisiana 2000 State Conference—Attended by committee members to network with other parishes in regard to Goal 6;
- Working Toward Peace—Anger management, conflict resolution, violence prevention training program for students;
- Non-Confrontational Discipline and Safe School Strategies—School personnel are trained in various safety issues, such as: crowd control, search/seizure procedures, fights, hostages, bomb threats, non-confrontational discipline techniques, nonviolent crisis-intervention training, etc.

**Student Identification**

Students who are potential candidates for Project Lifesaver are selected to attend an initial informational meeting (described below) with their parents. This selection is made by school administrators based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Student has received three or more school suspensions
- Student has been previously expelled
- Student has excessive absences
- Student has previously been a juvenile offender
- Student has exhibited poor study habits
- Student is in overall danger of failing or dropping out of school.

**Project Lifesaver Program**

Initially, Project Lifesaver was implemented in three stages or phases. The first phase

was to invite identified students and their parents to a special program. The program introduced students to a variety of community resources. Booths which housed these various resources were set up around the auditorium for students/parents to visit and get information. Additionally, the Child Welfare and Attendance supervisor, the local district attorney, the city sheriff, and the juvenile court judge addressed the group. Their primary purpose was to show their concern and willingness to work with the students and parents in partnership to assist in empowering students to reach their goals, with the understanding that every participant must do his/her part.

For those showing interest in finding out more about the specifics of Project Lifesaver, a second, follow-up meeting was held (Phase 2). Student and parent responsibilities were outlined.

Phase 3 begins for those students and parents interested in participating. Parent and student contracts that delineated specific responsibilities are reviewed and signed. Parent responsibilities include: attending monthly parent support group meetings, volunteer to assist with school-related activities, check child's homework, etc. Student responsibilities include: agree to abide by Lifesaver guidelines, attend school regularly, set specific goals for the school year (academic and behavioral), meet with a support person monthly, etc.

Students who participate are supported and encouraged through personal notes, telephone calls and monthly visits with their school support person. Forms are completed during each monthly visit to monitor progress and establish need for specific services (tutoring, counseling, etc.).

Incentives designed to encourage students in achieving their goals are a part of Project Lifesaver. These incentives include: recognition through cards, letters, phone calls, etc.; periodic special activities and an annual field trip. Students are also afforded the opportunity to attend a camp called Teen Spirit, sponsored by the Louisiana National Guard. The purpose of the camp is to promote cooperation, team building, decision making and positive attitudes.

Phase 4 begins with the identification of a new cycle of students for the next school session.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The majority of the cost for this program and all of the other components of the parish's "safe schools" plan are at no additional cost to the district other than allotted Drug-Free Schools funds. Most of the program is supported through volunteer and in-kind services.

**Staffing and staff development**

The strength of the overall "safe schools" program lies in part in its strong community collaborative efforts. For Project Lifesaver, no additional school staff are required. One existing staff person serves as an "intervention strategist" to facilitate the Lifesaver program on his/her campus.

Staff development for school personnel is ongoing, covering such topics as those mentioned above. Parents and students attend a four-part intervention strategy training program called SUPER as a part of their agreement to be involved in Project Lifesaver. These sessions help parents and students identify behaviors and activities that enhance communication and school performance.

**Program Contact**

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or Ms. Patricia Eidson
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Terrebonne Parish School Board
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The Honorable John Pettigrew
District Judge
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Houma, LA 70360

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# The KidMed Program - La Salle Parish School District in Louisiana

**Target At-Risk Population:** students qualifying for Medicaid services

## Background

La Salle Parish, in central Louisiana, is a relatively poor parish economically. The primary revenue of the parish is gas and oil. With the significant, long-term downturn in the petroleum industry, many in this parish have suffered. Consequently, one out of four students in the parish school system qualifies for Medicaid assistance.

In addition to overseeing special education services parish-wide, the special education supervisor also monitors other at-risk programs. In the past, she had billed Medicaid for occupational, physical, and speech therapy services to students qualifying for Medicaid coverage (via a Louisiana program called KidMed). Therefore, the supervisor decided to investigate other potential ways that school-related costs might be assumed through Medicaid. She contacted the Louisiana State Department of Health for information and also visited with local health professionals who had experience in working with the state's Medicaid programs. She found that if the school district were to become licensed as a designated Medicaid provider, KidMed would cover the costs for other services to qualifying students. Of specific interest were annual medical screenings of Medicaid students and various counseling services.

The special education supervisor facilitated a small cadre of local health care providers to help in her effort to expand services to students through Medicaid. As a result, the parish school district has become a licensed Medicaid provider. Through a contractual arrangement, a local nurse and physician serve as consultants. The nurse provides most of the basic medical services, while the physician provides consultative services when needed. Additionally, the special education supervisor convinced a Medicaid billing specialist (who previously worked for a local physician) to form a private business and to contract with the school district as their Medicaid billing agent. The school then officially established a cooperative arrangement with this newly established business.

## Program Description

Most of the students who qualify for Medicaid services are living in poverty as defined by federal and state guidelines. Approximately 25% of the parish school district's children fall under these guidelines. Others qualifying for Medicaid services

include certain children with disabilities. Services such as occupational, speech, and physical therapy can be billed to Medicaid through the KidMed program if these students have been identified by the state Medicaid system as qualifying for these services.

In the La Salle Parish schools, the school nurse does an annual basic medical screen/physical exam of students who are under Medicaid currently or who would potentially qualify. The nurse also helps parents fill out application forms for Medicaid. With the funds generated from these screenings, the school pays for the nurse's contracted services.

Medicaid also permits fees for administrative costs. Therefore, the billing agent's salary is also paid through Medicaid. If and when the physician's services are needed, his expenses are covered primarily by the medical screens. Other types of medical treatments/services that the physician might need to provide are billed to Medicaid directly by the physician.

With the additional funds generated from the medical screenings, the special education director hopes to hire several elementary school counselors. These "mental health providers" will provide a wide array of counseling services (personal, psychological, social, nutritional, self-esteem, drug-abuse, incest counseling, etc.). These services will be provided first to Medicaid-qualifying students needing these services. Later, these counselors will be able to expand their services to include all students in the district, not just those students qualifying for the KidMed program. Their salaries will be paid from the funds received from Medicaid. The school will also continue to bill Medicaid appropriately for special education services that fall under KidMed and also for reimbursable services to infants and toddlers.

### Governance and Administration

The school district has established itself as a licensed Medicaid provider. Therefore, the district is the primary fiscal agent and the coordinating agency for the parish-wide KidMed program. The district oversees the businesses and individuals involved in KidMed services (i.e., the billing agent, the school nurse, the physician, and other potential employees).

### Program Staff

The special education director of the school district is the overseer of the KidMed program. She functions under the superintendent and the school board. The billing agent is officially an outside professional being contracted with the school. However,

her office is housed with the special education director in the school district. Her services are funded by a percentage of what is billed to Medicaid. The nurse, who provides the medical screenings, is contracted by the school district and is also paid from the Medicaid funds. Similarly, the physician is contracted to provide specific kinds of services to specific students as those needs are identified.

In the future, the special education director hopes to hire the "mental health providers" (i.e., the school counselors) to provide an array of counseling services that are currently not available to any students. These mental health providers will be hired by the school district with the understanding that their salaries will come from Medicaid funds. If those funds are not forthcoming, the mental health providers will not be hired or continued.

**Program Evaluation**

Evaluation is under consideration. Currently, no evaluation is being undertaken other than the paperwork required by the Louisiana State Department of Health for all licensed Medicaid providers. The KidMed program is required to document the services that are being provided, and the times and dates thereof. This program is still primarily in the developmental phase. As the program progresses, the special education director will be involved in other types of evaluation, e.g., the services of the mental health providers.

**Program Contact**

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# Jump Start Program
# Bayard Elementary School
# Bayard, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Population:** Students entering grades 1-5 who need remedial or enrichment activities in order to be fully prepared for the first weeks of school

## Community Description/School Context

Bayard is the largest community in an area of mining towns in southwestern New Mexico. The school district is a consolidated district with a student population of 1,200. Bayard Elementary School has an enrollment of 360 students.

## Program Description

During the summer of 1990 a committee of teachers and school staff discussed academic problem areas and identified a need of many students to begin the school year better prepared for academics. The committee members had observed that while many students might "catch-up" with the rest of the class around October, a preparatory program was needed in order to help these students enter school "ready to learn."

The Jump Start Program was initiated three weeks prior to the start of the 1990-91 school year. It was designed with both remediation and enrichment components. Students are divided and grouped by grade level: 1-2, 3, 4-5. Approximately forty students have participated in this program each summer.

The remedial component primarily concentrates on language arts and mathematics. The enrichment component centers on thematic, whole-language units in order to improve students' communication skills.

The program involves three classroom periods of 90 minutes each with an additional period for open activities (story-hour, art projects, learning centers, etc.) at the end of each day. The open activities portion is open to any student in the community who would like to attend, regardless of their enrollment in Jump Start. During the last summer many pre-K children attended the open activities portion and were especially interested in the story-hour and art projects.

This program has been successful as measured by teachers' positive indications in a formal survey regarding student readiness for daily academic regiment. Results of both parental and student surveys for both the first and second year also indicate that students have begun class better prepared than before so that less time and effort is spent reviewing and remediating students at the beginning of the regular school year.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The Jump Start Program is run by two instructors and two teaching assistants. In addition to these professionals, volunteers, including parents, teachers, college students, and student siblings, have provided assistance.

The financial support for this program comes from district funds.

**Program Contact**

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Bayard, NM 88023

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## Learn How to Learn
## Lake Arthur High School
## Lake Arthur, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Population:** High school students identified as at-risk for failure resulting from inadequate academic preparation

### Community Description/School Context

Lake Arthur, population 400, is a small agricultural community located in southeastern New Mexico, thirty-five miles south of Roswell. Two-thirds of the school district's students are Hispanic. Most of the 200 students are considered at-risk with 70 percent qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

The high school is comprised of students grades 9 through 12 with small classrooms, usually limited to 10-13 students. Despite smaller class size, the high school has a problem of low academic achievement. Of the 52 high school students, twenty (38 percent) were enrolled in summer school during 1989, because of academic failure or retention.

### Program Description

The Learn How to Learn program was implemented as a result of noting students lack of learning skills rudimentary to academic success, such as, personal organization, time management, note taking, test preparation, etc. Learn How to Learn was first used with summer school students. At the end of the summer, the school's faculty and administrators observed such an increase in student academic abilities that the program was adopted for every student throughout the high school, and for grades 7 and 8 in middle school.

Learn How to Learn was established school-wide by the Lake Arthur High School for the first time during the 1989-90 school year. It became the curriculum for all students in English during the first two weeks. This was done to expose the students as early as possible to the concepts in the program so that they could apply their knowledge to all areas of their academic life. After the initial weeks it became a regular part of English, continued once per week throughout the year.

Since the implementation of Learn How to Learn, the school district has reported an increase in standardized achievement test scores. Where students previously reached plateaus at 9th grade they are now reporting to be on grade level through the 12th. The number of students on the honor roll increased from 10 percent to 30 percent.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

*Learn How to Learn - Study Skills* is an integrated textbook and teacher's guide, with support materials, which helps students "to acquire, practice, and use learning skills so that learning becomes a successful, lifelong habit." It addresses the areas of organization and time management, motivation and concentration, test taking, note taking and report writing, foreign language, and includes information for the home.

The materials in *Learn How to Learn* cost a total of $42 for each student and $46 for the teacher. These materials were purchased through the general textbook funds of the district. Staff was self-trained using the *Teachers Guide* and other information provided by the publisher.

**Program Contact**

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505/365-2000

*Learn How to Learn - Study Skills*
Herman Ohme, Author
California Educational Planning, Inc.,
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## Challenging Aspiring Students Everyday (C.A.S.E.)
## Melrose Public Schools
## Melrose, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Population:** Academically gifted students in grades K-12

### Community Description/School Context

Melrose is a community of 700 located on the high plains of eastern New Mexico. The community is typically rural with a stable agricultural economy of cattle, wheat, and milo. The Melrose school district population is 96 percent White non-Hispanic and the remainder Hispanic.

A total of 290 students attend Melrose Public Schools at two sites, a high school consisting of grades 7-12, and an elementary school.

### Program Description

In 1988, at the suggestion of the New Mexico Department of Education, a program was developed by the Melrose Public Schools which included enrichment activities at all grade levels for gifted students, within the framework of the general classroom curriculum. Challenging Aspiring Students Everyday (C.A.S.E.) began during the 1988-89 school year. Students who score in the top 10 percent of the district in any area of the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) or who are referred by their teachers are eligible to participate. Committees of teachers, principals and the counselor make determinations based on test scores and past progress. Each year, students are evaluated for their continued inclusion in the program. To this date, seven percent of the district's students are active program participants and participate in the enrichment activities developed in all subject areas and for all grade levels. Other students are allowed to participate in many of the enrichment activities as well, at the discretion of each teacher.

C.A.S.E. program specifics include a wide variety of activities. An example in the elementary school is a project in which the students actively correspond with a school in Melrose, Scotland. This project was developed to broaden students' understanding of geography and culture while improving their writing skills.

The high school offers programs for students in many areas including those tailored to individual students, early release for off-site education, and concurrent enrollment with the nearest community college in Clovis. These college courses are open to 11th and 12th grade students with the district providing the tuition.

The Melrose Schools dropout rate has been significantly below the state level for the last few years. In comparison to the 88 school districts in New Mexico in 1991-92, Melrose ranked 55 in its dropout rate; 21 in the New Mexico High School Competency Exam; and 54 in the percent of seniors graduating. In the Quality of Education Survey conducted in 1991-92, 70 percent of the parents strongly agreed and/or agreed that their children could effectively think through problems and express solutions in written and verbal forms.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

C.A.S.E is administered by both of the schools' principals with the district counselor providing assessment and evaluation measures. Funds for the program come from state funds for enrichment programs. These funds provide approximately $1,000 per student or $20,000 for the district per year.

All teachers participate in C.A.S.E. While the district specifically has not trained teachers in the needs of gifted students, it recognizes this as an area to be addressed through staff development.

**Program Contact**

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## Talent Search
## Eastern New Mexico University
## Roswell, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Popula'ion:** Low income students, in grades 7-12, who are first generation college-bound

### Community Description/School Context

Talent Search serves several small communities in southeastern New Mexico: Carrizozo, Dexter, Lake Arthur, Hondo, Capitan, and Ruidoso. These communities surround the city of Roswell, and are generally economically depressed with Hispanic and Native American populations.

The communities participating in Talent Search contain many families in which no person has ever attended a college or university. This underdeveloped human resource potential has been targeted for the future economic viability of these communities, including Roswell. More than 900 students have been identified for participation in Talent Search.

### Program Description

The Talent Search program was initiated on September, 1991, by Eastern New Mexico University at Roswell (ENMU-R) as an opportunity to encourage future college attendance by high school students in surrounding communities. Studies, conducted by the University, found that included in such barriers to college attendance as low income and academic preparation, was a perception that there was little benefit, for these students and their families, to college attendance.

The program initiator at ENMU-R wrote a proposal for a program to reach these students in their local school districts. The focus of Talent Search is to improve the perception about the benefits of college education while providing direct services for high school students. These services include tutoring, workshops, home visits, and field trips.

Academic tutoring services are provided by each district. Under the supervision of ENMU-R, districts are encouraged to design their own framework for tutoring. Many use faculty and community resources for grades 9-12 and hire student peers for 7th and 8th grade students, with the university underwriting the cost of hiring tutors.

ENMU-R provides workshops throughout the year to teach students about the risks of not completing school and the benefits of obtaining a high school diploma and attending college. These workshops are conducted in each of the local communities. Talent Search also sponsors field trips in which students are brought to the ENMU-R campus to visit and observe its academic environment.

The families of students who participate in Talent Search are visited by counselors who encourage family members to support their students' high school matriculation and college attendance.

Of the 130 senior served during the first year, 82 of them went on to higher education or some type of training. Of the 492 seventh and eighth graders participating in the program, 83 percent were enrolled in the peer tutoring sessions with 75 percent of these improving their grades. The 202 ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade participants also demonstrated improvement in their grades. In the pilot summer remedial program conducted in the Roswell area, 98 percent of the 77 middle school students enrolled passed on to the next grade level.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The Talent Search program was funded through a Title IV grant from the U.S. Department of Education. ENMU-R initiated the proposal which entails a cost of $200,000 for each of three years, beginning with the 1991-92 school year. Three counselors, along with the program director, are funded through this grant. Projects, such as tutoring of students, are also funded under the grant. The counselors spend four days per week in the participating communities directly implementing the program in cooperation with the local districts.

**Program Contacts**

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## Environmental Education Project
## Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School
## Vanderwagen, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Population:** Native American students who need high level thinking skills and problem-solving techniques

### Community Description/School Context

The Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School in Vanderwagen, New Mexico, is a Bureau of Indian Affairs school built in the 1930's to serve the children in the Navajo community of Chi Chil Tah. Prior to this time, Navajo children who went to school traveled long distances to large boarding institutions far from their homes. The school now serves 240 Navajo students in grades K-7. Ninety-five percent of the students are participants in the free lunch program, and 95 percent are limited English proficient.

### Program Description

The Environmental Education Project was the result of school, community, and national needs assessment which pointed out the need for students to develop higher level thinking skills and problem-solving techniques.

The Environmental Education Project at Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School was designed as a holistic program to be integrated into all areas of the school's curriculum, and is not a pull-out project. It is a composite program developed to increase student awareness of the natural world, basic to the Navajo tradition, as well as to improve student thinking and problem-solving skills. Teachers incorporate Project objectives within their regular school program, using materials and strategies from different sources such as Project Wild. An area outside of the school building is designed as an outdoor classroom with substations arranged in a nature walk where students examined their native environment.

The Environmental Education Project uses the Whole Language approach to increase students' skills in the English language. The project focuses on five objectives:

- development of an awareness of the natural and artificial environments.
- development of knowledge about how the environment works.
- development of knowledge about technological, social, cultural, political, and economic relationships today.


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- development of active inquiry and problem-solving skills along with appropriate values to guide behavior in dealing with environmental issues.
- motivation of students to apply problem-solving strategies to maintain a balance between quality of life and quality of the environment.

While formal test data are not available at this time, preliminary results of a student survey conducted this year indicate favorable response to and acceptance of the program.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The program was designed through a school leadership team comprised of the school principal and six teachers. This team oversaw the implementation of the program. Staff training in environmental education both at the school site and off-site was provided by the New Mexico Museum of National History, the American Wilderness Leadership School, Project Wild, and the National Audubon Society. The program is also used as a resource in Native American studies.

Costs of the program were borne through the special funds that the district receives for Native American resources and Chapter 1. Assistance in the development of the program was provided by the New Mexico Game and Fish Department, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the National Park Service, the Audubon Society, and the United States Soil Conservation Service.

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## Distance Learning
## Interactive Television
## San Jon, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Population:** Rural high school students

### Community Description/School Context

The interactive television cooperative, Distance Learning, links ten small rural farming/ranching communities in eastern New Mexico. The ten communities are Clayton, Clovis, Ft. Sumner, Grady, House, Logan, Mosquero, Roy, San Jon, and Santa Rosa.

### Program Description

Distance Learning originated from the Eastern New Mexico Rural (ENMR) Telephone Cooperative. ENMR was convinced that the viability of the rural school was essential to the survival of the surrounding population, ENMR's subscription base. With the cooperation of the telephone cooperative and four schools, a pilot project using fiber optics went on line for the 1990-91 school year.

The local telephone cooperative assumed all costs for setting up the network, including installation of production gear for studio classrooms. They sought support from the state legislature but were not successful. So, with an interest-free loan from the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), they decided to establish a successful program and then petition the state legislature for reimbursement. The schools' obligation would be to coordinate schedules and classes so that the system could be used effectively.

After spending time ironing out scheduling problems, a cluster of schools agreed to a Monday-Thursday week. Each school supplied one course. Courses taught included physics, algebra, Spanish, Southwestern literature, and art appreciation.

Clovis Community College joined the network during the 1991-92 school year. The college was able to offer a number of dual-enrollment courses, allowing students to gain both high school and college credit. Qualifying high school students have been able to take an array of dual-enrollment courses, including psychology, sociology, algebra, English, Spanish, and art appreciation. These courses were particularly attractive to college-bound students (typically 40-60 percent of the school population) because these courses were offered at no cost to the students. Participating students have accumulated as many as thirty hours of college credit prior to graduating from high school.

For the 1992-93 school year a unique cluster was formed involving a high school and a remote elementary school in the same district, but located 45 miles apart. Previously, students graduating from the K-8 elementary school had to travel 90 miles a day to attend ninth grade at the high school. The president of the school board had assisted in the installation of media labs in other schools and was a strong advocate of technology in education. After some persuasion and after taking administrators and board members to visit the two-way interactive television sites in operation, the school district decided to implement a remote ninth grade classroom in the remote K-8 elementary school.

Since they were not a part of the pilot initiative, the school district had to bear the cost of equipping classrooms with production equipment. The technology allowed the school system to deliver a full complement of ninth grade classes to students who would otherwise have had to travel a great distance to attend the high school. A facilitator is present at the remote classroom during classes.

Students had the option of staying at the elementary school for ninth grade or bussing to the high school with older students from the area. Eight out of the ten students who started in the fall of 1992 elected to take classes over the network. The grades for those ninth graders are comparable to or better than those of their peers at the high school.

During the 1992-93 school year, the role of the community college in the network increased. Two schools were unable to offer some courses because of faculty changes, so the community college was able to step in and increase its participation. Also, the community college offered a number of college level courses in the evening for community members. As many as 28 adults enrolled at one school. Courses offered included accounting, art appreciation, English composition, American government, and psychology. The community college is currently writing a grant to upgrade its network facilities in order to expand its course offerings. Plans are underway to provide for a second broadcast from Clovis Community College which would allow for two different classes to be taught at the same time and for schools to choose which class best meets their needs.

Originally, the ENMR telephone cooperative had planned to put as many as 20 schools on the network, and a number of schools have petitioned them for network access. Although the cooperative was partially compensated by the state for classroom installation, it is unlikely to make any further large scale investment unless the state and/or school districts agree to support the initiative up front. Currently, there are ten communities participating in the program.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Eastern New Mexico Rural Telephone Cooperative
- Special legislative funding to pay for equipment
- Community support through donation of capital tax credit rebates

**Staffing and staff development**

- classroom monitors
- technical training utilizing fiber optic systems for teachers

**Special Equipment/materials**

Fiber optics network, telephone route switching equipment, TV monitors, FAX machines, microphones.

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## Silver High Opportunity School
## Silver City, New Mexico

**Target At-risk Population:** Potential high school dropouts

### Community Description/School Context

Silver City is a community of approximately 12,000 and is located in the southwestern corner of New Mexico. It is about 325 miles southwest of Albuquerque. It is a rather isolated community primarily supported by mining and ranching. Western New Mexico University is located in Silver City and is a significant educational asset to the community. Community support of and involvement in the school system is also reported to be an asset.

The Silver Consolidated School District serves a little over 4,000 students. This district includes a small K-12 school in Cliff, a neighboring community less than 30 miles away, and six major attendance centers in Silver City. These include four K-5 schools, one 6-8 middle school and one 9-12 high school. The high school serves approximately 1,100 students. Student ethnicity is evenly distributed between Hispanics and Whites (48 percent each). The remaining 4 percent are composed of Blacks, Asians and Native Americans. Approximately 70 percent of the student body participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

### Program Description

The Silver High Opportunity School is an alternative high school program that developed out of a concern by high school teachers and administrators for some unmet needs of high school students at risk of dropping out. It is a dropout prevention program housed off of the high school's main campus. Of particular concern are teen parents (both male and female) as well as students with academic, family, personal, and/or attendance problems. At present approximately 80 students are served by 5 teachers. Students are referred to the alternative high school program from attendance records, staff/teacher recommendations or student self-referrals, and student participation is voluntary. Students may continue to enroll in the alternative high school until they graduate or may reenter the traditional high school after they "catch up" to their peers academically.

The alternative high school teachers cover all high school curricular content areas and work closely with the main high school administrative and counseling staff. Through smaller class size (1/15 teacher to student ratio), more flexible student scheduling, teacher team counseling, and a more personal, caring, "family" atmosphere, the alternative high

school staff seek to keep students in school and to help them become more successful academically. Curricula are adjusted and individualized to the academic levels of the students. However, alternative high school students are required to meet the same established outcomes and graduation requirements as those in the traditional high school. A GED curriculum is not offered.

The traditional high school is structured around an eight period day. However the alternative high school meets from 8:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. daily for a total of 6 periods per day. This allows participants several possible options for their afternoons. These options include taking coursework at the traditional high school, taking college-credit courses at the local university, participating in a cooperative work program with local businesses, or participating in various service learning programs in the community—including a project to upgrade the alternative school facility. These service learning projects allow participating students to receive 1 high school credit for 120 clock hours or service. Additional flexibility in scheduling is "worked out" for students with additional family responsibilities or other circumstances. However, each student at the alternative high school must complete the same required high school credits as those at the traditional high school in order to graduate.

One of the primary services in the alternative high school program is the Graduation Reality And Dual-Skills (GRADS) program, focused on keeping teen parents in school. Both male and female teen parents are targeted, as well as those who have undergone abortions or miscarriages and those who have given their babies up for adoption. An on-site child care center provides for the needs of students' children while they are in school. In addition parenting programs are conducted through a collaborative arrangement with a local state university (WNMU) early childhood program. Sex education, child development, and child rearing curricula are also covered as well as information about potentially needed social services.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Local and state funds already received by the school district fund much of the program.
- Children, Youth, and Families Division (state agency) grant helps to fund the child care center.
- Eastern New Mexico University funded the GRADS teacher for 2 years but is now funded out of district budget.
- Local businesses have assisted in remodeling and furnishing the child care center.

**Staffing and staff development**

- Five teachers provide the academic instruction
- The principal and counselors from the main high school campus provide support
- Child care is provided in part through Western New Mexico University
- Early Childhood Programs, whose staff work with the teen parents and their children.
- Two child care center personnel—a facilitator and a paraprofessional

**Program Evaluation**

The alternative high school program has a short history, having been planned for and implemented during the 1992-93 school year. However, preliminary data suggest that the program is having a positive impact. Information being collected include:

- drop out data
- student absentee data
- student grades

Other "softer" information, such as a growing waiting list for program inclusion and increasing parent involvement (through parent conferences with teacher team and in helping in developing to plan the students's program), also point to the alternative high school program as holding promise for having a positive effect on targeted at-risk students.

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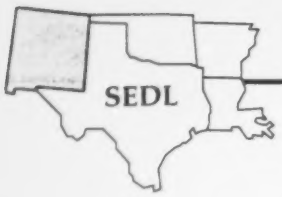


## DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS
**Cuba, New Mexico**

**Target At-Risk Population:** All K-12 Students

### Community Description/School Context

Cuba, New Mexico is a rural community with a population of about 750, although the school district serves approximately 4,500 residents in a 1,800 square mile area around Cuba. The community is located approximately 75 miles north and slightly west of Albuquerque. The local economy is relatively poor, relying primarily on farming and ranching.

The Cuba School District consists of a K-5 elementary school, one middle school (6-8) and a high school. The overall student population of about 800 is ethnically diverse with 33 percent Hispanic, 59 percent Native American, and 8 percent White. About 90 percent of the student population participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

### Program Description

During the 1989-90 school year, the Cuba school leadership initiated a strategic planning process to identify and plan efforts that would enhance the range and quality of educational services to the students of the Cuba school district. This planning committee concluded that an infusion of a variety of technologies was crucial in order to prepare their students for the 21st century. They were convinced that their students needed to develop an awareness of and facility with managing information through various computer and other telecommunications technologies. Further, these school leaders felt that unless current technologies were brought into the classrooms and schools, their students would be disadvantaged vis-à-vis their larger school district counterparts.

#### At the classroom level

Each classroom is equipped with a telephone, a television monitor, and 3-6 networked computers. Eventually all classrooms will have 7 computers. Not only are the computers networked together at the classroom level, but are also linked to computers throughout the school and district. Further, through New Mexico Technet, they are able to access the Internet, thereby expanding capacity to link with computers worldwide. Teachers and students use these local-area and wide-area networks in a variety of ways to expand the quality of educational opportunities.



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Classrooms are also "wired" via fiber optic cable such that teachers can bring in a videotape camera and "broadcast" classroom activities (a class play, a special speaker, etc.) to the television monitor in the classroom, to other classrooms, to the entire school, or to the local community. In the same way, building-level or central administrators are able to address their students and/or faculty individually, in selected groups, or as a whole.

**At the building level**

Each school library is equipped with a "head end" unit. This unit contains a television monitor, two VCR's, a laser disk player, and connection to the satellite dish. The head end unit can be used by several teachers at the same time. Consequently, while one teacher has accessed the laser disk unit, another teacher can use one of the VCRs. Still another teacher can simultaneously import a program via satellite. Teachers schedule the use of these technological supports with their media specialist/librarian.

**Satellite programs**

With the downlink capabilities at each school, programs from CNN, Discovery, the Learning Channel, etc. are able to be videotaped by the librarian and saved for use by teachers at appropriate times.

Programs can also be broadcast "live" to targeted classes. In more unique circumstances, these programs may originate from commercial stations (CNN, etc.). However, programs also originate from other sources. Advanced placement (AP) courses in English and mathematics are provided to Cuba High School students from the Virginia Satellite Network, and elementary students benefit from Spanish classes from Northern Arizona University. Middle school students also receive supplemental programming in science and mathematics via satellite.

**VCRs/Laser Disks**

Teachers coordinate the use of various components of the school's head end unit with their librarian/media specialist. When a teacher wishes to use a videotape or a laser disk to enhance or supplement lesson objectives, he/she can import these resources into the classroom from the library. For videotapes, the teacher simply arranges for the librarian to load the selected videotape into one of the VCRs of the head end unit. Then, via an infrared sensor built into the classroom television monitor, the teacher uses a remote control unit to play the prearranged videotape.

Laser disk technology is somewhat more complex. These commercially produced disks store a great deal of information (printed, pictures, video clips, etc.) that are accessible. Typically, however, information is not arranged on a disk in the same order as desired by

the teacher. However, each bit of stored information has been assigned a bar code number (like the codes found on items in grocery stores). A manual that identifies each bit of information located on the disk also identifies the bar code number assigned to each information items. The teacher then must arrange the bar codes into the desired sequence. As the teacher progresses through the lesson, he/she uses a bar code scanner to move through the selected items in order to use the laser disk to illustrate specific lesson points. This scanner, like the VCR remote control, accesses the information from the head end unit in the school library and transmits it to the television monitor in the classroom.

**Programs of Note**

Over the six years that the Cuba schools have worked to infuse these technologies into everyday school activities, many different projects and programs have been developed by students and teachers. E-mail connections, science projects with the Los Alamos National Laboratory, research projects, and other technologically supported activities are a regular part of the educational process. Two specific programs help to illustrate how the Cuba schools are moving to integrate technology into school programs. These programs are the News 101 class and the vocational program.

**News 101**

News 101 is an introductory course in broadcast journalism. It is similar to a traditional high school journalism class, except that the medium is multimedia rather than simply written/photographic. Though the year the News 101 students work on several stories that are of interest to them. They use journalistic techniques to research these stories, including interviewing skills. They also learn how to use a video camera, how to make editing decisions and actually do video editing, and how to put a video story together to have its intended impact. The end products are then "broadcast" in the school district and community.

**Vocational Program**

Cuba has had a multifaceted, traditional vocational program for many years. However, this area, too, has been targeted for an infusion of technologies. During the 1994-95 school year the district was successful in proposing and passing a $900,000 bond issue. A portion of these bonds centers around improving the vocational education facilities and program. Though some of the underpinnings for this updated vocational program are already in place, most of the plans are yet in the future. The superintendent anticipates that most or all components of the new plan will be implemented in the 1995-96 school year, though he speculates that it will take a year "to work the bugs out."

The envisioned vocational plan begins with an introductory program that will allow students to investigate many different vocations through "systems simulations." By using computers and various simulation software, students will explore how to design such things as heating and air conditioning systems for buildings or frame construction. Flight simulation, aerodynamics, super-conductivity, etc. are also able to be explored.

Following this introductory vocational program, students can pursue programs in six areas in more in-depth ways. These include:

1. Flexible manufacturing—students will gain experience in computer-aided design and programming for manufacturing.
2. Robotics—the vocational lab will have components available for students to design build, and program robots for specific tasks.
3. Fabrication and Prototyping—traditional "shop" courses (wood, metal, welding) will be updated to incorporate current industry uses of developing prototypes (through both computer-aided design and fabricating prototypes or models out of soap, etc.) before actually producing small objects.
4. Lasers/Communications—students gain experience with fiber optic technologies for transmitting data, sound, video, etc. electronically.
5. Multimedia Productions—students will gain understanding in use, care, maintenance, and repair of multimedia equipment.
6. Electronics—this is basically a traditional vocational electronics program, but with up-to-date technologies included
7. Automotive Repair—basic program, but with state of the art technologies that are used by professional auto-mechanics (computer diagnostics, etc.).

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The program has been predominantly funded locally (by reprioritizing/ redirecting district funds and through passage of bond elections). However, some funds have come from the New Mexico State Department of Education for computer software.

**Staffing and staff development**

The school district will release a regular classroom teacher with expertise in computer networking half-time to oversee the maintenance of the computerized networks and other technologies. However, this infusion of technologies into teaching practice has been accomplished through staff development activities for existing faculty and staff.

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**I*EARN PROJECT**
**A:Shiwi Elementary School**
**Zuni, New Mexico**

**Target At-Risk Population:** Elementary School Students

**Community Description/School Context**

A:Shiwi Elementary School is part of the Zuni Public School District located on the Zuni Pueblo reservation in the extreme western part of New Mexico. Zuni Pueblo has occupied this site since the reconquest of New Mexico by the Spanish in 1692. The nearest town is Gallup, located 35 miles north of Zuni; Albuquerque is 160 miles to the east.

Because of their isolation, the Zuni people (population approximately 5,900) have maintained a strong traditional religious, linguistic and cultural heritage. The Zuni language, unique among the seven Native American languages spoken in New Mexico, is predominant in the homes and in all Tribal government, religious, social, and cultural interactions. The extended families are large, with aunts, uncles and grandparents sharing many of the parental responsibilities. Ninety-nine percent of the district's 1,700 students are Native American. Eighty-nine percent of the students enrolled in the public schools speak Zuni when they enter school, and they are encouraged to speak Zuni in their classrooms.

Farming and ranching are still practiced, but most income for Zuni Tribal members comes from making silver and turquoise jewelry. Since there are few other jobs available on the reservation, the primary income is based on the production of jewelry. Families work in their homes and then sell their work to non-Indian traders who market it worldwide. Most Zunis have low incomes compared to national standards. Ninety-one percent of Zuni students are eligible for the free/reduced lunch program.

**Program Description**

The International Educational and Resource Network (I*EARN) was developed in 1988 by the Copen Family Fund (a philanthropic foundation) as a means whereby children worldwide could communicate and work together through telecommunications technologies as an integrated part of their education process. It is a network of hundreds of schools in more than 20 countries around the world. The goal of I*EARN is to engage children in meaningful, collaborative ways on a variety of projects that will have a positive impact on people and/or the environment. Further, it is hoped that as students participate in I*EARN projects and activities, they will develop an understanding that they are all

citizens of the world and are responsible for doing what they can to help make the world a better place to live. I•EARN is one of numerous similar networks that are being used by teachers and students worldwide. Some networks, like I•EARN, are more formalized, while others have developed more informally.

A:Shiwi Elementary School became involved in the I•EARN network through the initiative of the Copen foundation's efforts. The foundation contacted Save the Children for possible suggestions of a Native Indian school that might be interested in joining the I•EARN network. Save the Children suggested A:Shiwi Elementary School. With computer hardware, software, and ongoing telephone costs all donated from various sources, A:Shiwi came "on line" in 1993.

Two kinds of activities predominate I•EARN connections between/among schools. One is a pen pal type of activity (called key pals for computer network linkages), whereby individual students, small groups, or whole classes write and send letters to each other electronically. These interactions invariably generate greater interest in finding out more about the area's culture, geography, problems, etc. associated with their electronic "pals."

The second kind of activity among I•EARN schools is more service oriented. Often, as students communicate electronically, local problems are mentioned (or surface in other ways). As children elsewhere become aware of a problem, they sometimes find ways to help to solve or mitigate the problem. For example, a community in Nicaragua had no clean water locally. The people of the community hauled water from a river 6 kilometers away. More than 40 I•EARN and other schools collected money in various ways to contribute to a fund to relieve this water shortage problem. The funds were used to build a well in the Nicaraguan village, thereby allowing children to go to school rather than to walk back and forth from the river to fetch water.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The Copen Family Fund and Save the Children worked together to provide a computer needed to connect to the I•EARN network. The Intel Corporation contributed a modem. Save the Children covers the ongoing telephone line costs associated with connecting to the Internet. I•EARN has waived the annual network fee that is typically charged to participating schools.

**Staffing and staff development**

No additional staff are required. Initial staff development was required to understand computer basics and Internet access.

**Program Contact**

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## Southeast New Mexico Educational Resource Center
## Carlsbad, New Mexico

**Target At-Risk Population:** All K-5 elementary students

**Background**

Sandia National Labs, Westinghouse, and the U.S. Department of Energy have been working in the Carlsbad area on a waste management pilot project for a number of years. Because of this experimental involvement, they also wanted to work with the communities and school districts of the surrounding area to help enhance the quality of education in this southeast corner of New Mexico. Interactions with superintendents and small projects (e.g., sponsoring science fairs) with schools gave birth to a consortium of 11 school districts that agreed to work together with these agencies and organizations to enhance their elementary level science programs.

These school leaders were aware that many of their elementary teachers had neither the scientific expertise nor the time to modify, supplement, and improve their basic science curriculum with more innovative, interactive activities or science experiments. On the other hand, the Sandia National Labs had experience working with other schools, resulting in the development of several elementary-level, self-contained, thematic science kits. One of the 11 school districts had also already explored and adopted a similar science approach to that which the Sandia National Labs had helped to develop.

The 1993-1994 school year was a planning year for the consortium. This collaborative team, working with their teachers and school administrators, determined the kinds of kits that were most desired for supporting existing curricula. Together they established the Southeast New Mexico Educational Resource Center (SNMERC). The consortium also contracted with one of the superintendents, who was retiring, to become the director of the science improvement project and the SNMERC. This director was responsible for coordinating the planning and development of the kits, as well as conducting staff development on how to use the kits. Staff development trainings began in the spring semester of 1995. To date, more than 415 kits, representing 11 thematic science units and covering six grade levels (K-5), have been developed and fully stocked. Teachers started using these kits during the second six-week period of the spring 1995 semester.

**Program Description**

The science kits are plastic tubs containing a wide variety of materials. Each kit contains several activities and/or experiments centered around a specific scientific theme. Because the collaborative project is still in its beginning stages, the variety of themes is somewhat limited, though plans include the development of additional kits around other scientific topics as time and funding allow. The original themes were selected by participating teachers and include the following:

| Grade | Theme |
|---|---|
| K | Beginning Senses<br>My Body<br>My Environment |
| 1 | Animals oin our World<br>Measurement<br>Weather |
| 2 | Introduction to Energy<br>Living in the Desert<br>Changes |
| 3 | Barley to Bubbles (measurement)<br>Finding Out (scientific method)<br>Fin and Feather |
| 4 | Earthquakes<br>Relative Position<br>Arthropods |
| 5 | Mystery Powders<br>Pendulums<br>Flight and Space Exploration |

Each kit contains the following:

- workbooks for all students
- materials needed to conduct the various experiments and science activities
- curriculum outlines and step-by-step instructions for the teacher

The activities are designed to be accomplished by students individually or in paired groups. However, they can be adapted for small groups organized for cooperative learning.

Because each of the 11 school districts is organized around six-week grading periods, with three 6-week periods per semester, the science kits are checked out by teachers on a 6-week basis. The teachers with access to these kits have been trained about what each kit contains and about how the activities might be used. These teachers are then able to adapt the activities to their own science curriculum and to organize their overall science sequence to coincide with when they are able to check out specific kits.

Currently, there are, on average, 25 kits centered around each of the 18 themes (450 kits overall). The director of the consortium schedules each of the 25 kits for individual teachers and then rotates the kits accordingly throughout the year to all interested teachers for use in their science curriculum. Kits are delivered to the assigned schools at the beginning of each six-week period. Near the end of each six weeks, the kits are collected and returned to the consortium headquarters where volunteers restock all of the kits with new student workbooks and any missing, broken, or consumed materials. Restocked kits are then delivered for a new six-week cycle and grading period.

A survey of teachers determined the original 18 content areas for the kits. As funding and other resources permit, kits will be developed around additional thematic units.

**Governance and Administration**

The Southeast New Mexico Educational Resource Center office is located in the Sandia National Labs Headquarters in Carlsbad, New Mexico. Sandia Labs is donating office space for the consortium and the funding of materials to develop and replenish the science kits. Westinghouse has contributed $20,000 for the project. The U.S. Department of Energy has contributed resources from their waste management project. In addition to the aforementioned contributions, each of the eleven school districts is providing $2 per child annually to help fund the resource center and the science kit project. Some districts use "Eisenhower" funds for this project.

The director of the consortium was hired on a contract basis out of the funds provided for the resource center. The fiscal agent is the Pecos Valley Special Education Cooperative which serves several of the schools in the eleven-district consortium. The Cooperative volunteered to cover this responsibility because of their interest in the project and because of their capacity to assume easily these fiscal management tasks.

The consortium is governed by representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy, the Sandia National Labs, and Westinghouse, as well as the consortium director and the superintendents from each of the 11 school districts.

The director of the consortium is pursuing other grants to expand the consortium's capacity to provide a broader array of themes in math and science. Expertise is needed to develop curricula in these areas as well as identifying materials needed for specific activities in these areas. Therefore, funds to expand the consortium staff are being investigated and pursued.

**Program Staff**

Currently, there is one program director. As additional funds become available, a bookkeeper/ clerical position will be added as well as a curriculum professional to train teachers and to develop new kits. Presently, the program director is responsible for the bookkeeping, clerical work, staff development, and the development of new kits. Volunteers are recruited to help in the stocking and restocking of the kits each six weeks.

**Program Evaluation**

Evaluation is under consideration. Currently, no evaluation will be undertaken other than the fiscal accountability required by the Sandia National Labs and Westinghouse. This program is still in a developmental phase and, as such, no formal program evaluation currently exists. At the end of the school year, informal information will be collected from teachers relative to how the kits have worked out and how they might be refined and improved. A formal program evaluation is planned for the future and will probably consist of the following:

- monitoring student performance on standardized tests in the areas of math and science for signs of improvement.
- surveys to determine teacher and students attitudes about the science kits

**Program Contact**

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## Home-School-Community Partnerships
## Belen, San Felipe, et al.

**Target At-Risk Population:** Children ages 0-8

### Background

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) staff have been concerned with the success of young children in school. By helping communities build partnerships with schools, families, and various agencies, the staff felt that students would have an increased chance for success in school and in their personal lives. As a result of this concern, SEDL initiated a program entitled Home-School-Community (HSC) Partnerships to facilitate local collaborations to address the health, education, and social needs of targeted communities in SEDL's five-state region, particularly as these needs have impact on infants and young children.

In New Mexico, SEDL staff, working in concert with State Department of Education and Children, Youth, & Families Department personnel, selected eight pilot sites in six communities across New Mexico. In collaboration with New Mexico State Departments, SEDL staff have provided technical assistance to help build these partnerships. The selected communities, Albuquerque (two different partnerships), Belen, Cuba, Farmington, Hagerman/Dexter, Las Cruces, and San Felipe, represent a diversity of community size and geographic location.

### Program

Often people who provide an important service to children are unaware of other people who provide different services in other organizations, groups, or agencies. By meeting together on a regular basis, these people from different agencies become aware of each other, develop relationships that foster a willingness to refer children and families to these other agencies, and even pursue collaborative efforts to provide more sophisticated services to some children who have unique needs. This is the vision of the Home-School-Community (HSC) Partnership project. Specifically, the goals of the HSC partnership efforts are as follows:

- Develop an understanding among partners of existing services.
- Exchange ideas for using available resources.
- Examine priority needs in terms of health and social services.

- Develop a shared vision for addressing the needs identified by the partners.
- Explore possibilities of collaborating with other entities.
- Develop activities, programs, and projects that reflect the partners' vision.
- Initiate the development of local leadership.

Three interwoven concepts guide the promotion of effective partnerships: a strategic planning phase, collaboration, and a neutral facilitator. In the strategic planning phase potential partners are identified. These families, school staff, and community representatives commit to work as equal, interdependent partners to plan, implement, and assess:

- coordinated, comprehensive services (educational, social welfare, health, mental health, etc.) and/or
- academic support services (tutoring, training, mentoring, etc.).

As these team members work together in this planning phase, a shared understanding of the community's strengths and weaknesses begins to develop and opportunities for addressing priority concerns become identified. Other benefits include the following:

- Collaborative relationships develop.
- A broad base of support for change is built.
- Mechanisms for sharing information among partners and key community members are developed.
- Opportunities for sharing resources and participating in joint activities are identified.

To accomplish these new roles and relationships, SEDL staff have found that generally it is important to identify a neutral facilitator rather than having one of the partners serving as facilitator. Such a neutral facilitator can make sure that all partners are well represented. Further, because of a more objective perspective, a neutral facilitator is able to ensure that diverse perspectives are honored and that consensus among partners is, indeed, being achieved. SEDL staff meet with the facilitators on a monthly basis to help them as they plan and organize their partnership meetings. The facilitators, in turn, meet with their HSC partners every six to eight weeks on average. The partnership meetings usually last about two hours. During the meetings, projects are updated, discussed, and celebrated. Concerns and needs are also discussed. Committees are then formed to propose and develop solutions to meet those needs. This may include pursuing grant moneys to address larger concerns when such concerns are identified.

The third hallmark component of HSC partnerships is collaboration. It is not enough to plan together, or even to cooperate on or coordinate services. Collaboration

requires that partners "establish common goals and agree to use their personal and institutional power to achieve them" (Melaville and Blank, *Together We Can*, 1993, p. 15). In essence, it is a high degree of commitment to each other and to the accomplishment of common goals.

Specific examples of what some of the HSC partnerships are doing will be helpful. All of the New Mexico partnerships involve a linkage between Head Start and the public schools. In Belen, New Mexico the HSC partners include Head Start, K-3 teachers and principal, an occupational therapist, a school nurse, parents, a bilingual home/ school liaison, and the Title I teacher (remedial language arts and math). Some of the activities that are either planned for or have been executed include:

- sponsoring a breakfast for community businessmen/businesswomen to acquaint them with issues surrounding the transition of children into school,
- sponsoring a needs assessment questionnaire for parents,
- organizing multicultural activities where parents share talents and resources,
- providing summer story time sessions,
- providing CPR training for parents.

The San Felipe partnership has proceeded in a different way. Partners represent members of the Pueblo Tribal Council, parents, Head Start, and public school teachers. At present, there are no community representatives, though there is a strong desire to draw business people and community resource persons into the partnership collaborative. To date, their efforts have focused primarily on how to ease the transition of Head Start students into the public school system. They have sponsored two transition activities—bringing the Head Start students and teachers to the elementary school for a visit and sponsoring Kindergarten pre-registration sessions at the Head Start Center. Partners have also worked together in the development of a five-week summer program (Chapter I Pre-kindergarten Lead-In Program) to further ease this transition.

**Program Staff**

In New Mexico neutral facilitators have been identified for most of the eight partnership demonstration/pilot sites. In two instances a neutral facilitator and one of the collaborative partners serve as co-facilitators. Many of the neutral facilitators are from the NM Children, Youth, and Families Department or the State Department of Education. In some cases the neutral facilitator is a community leader or member who has no direct involvement with any of the partners.

SEDL staff have provided technical assistance and played a pivotal role in organizing and developing these HSC partnerships. In other state efforts, SEDL staff have served as the facilitators of demonstration site HSC partnerships. However, in New Mexico SEDL staff have been able to integrate the HSC pilot projects into existing state department activities. Consequently, in most cases SEDL staff have served primarily as trainers and consultants to state department personnel or other local persons who are serving as facilitators.

Typically one of the partners serves to record and keep the minutes of the HSC partnership meetings.

**Program Contacts**

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# Technology Program
# Chamberlain Middle School
# Aline, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** Middle School students, grades 6-8
Special Education students
Gifted students

## Community Description/School Context

Aline in northwest Oklahoma is a predominantly White non-Hispanic, middle-income community of approximately 3,000. Farming, light industry, and the oil industry provide the economic base for the community.

Chamberlain Middle School is part of the Fairview Public Schools, a consolidated district consisting of three school sites enrolling students from nearby communities. The district's total enrollment is approximately 700; 172 attend Chamberlain Middle School.

## Program Description

The Chamberlain Middle School Technology Program serves as an example of a rural, small school using technology to access information beyond the boundaries of the school. Innovative approaches to integrating technology across content areas are being used to make learning relevant to rural students, and technology has been used to overcome the barrier of isolation by making the world the students' classroom. Specific strategies addressed special students' needs. Students have increased opportunities for leadership with peers from their school and from other schools, and for developing presentation skills as they teach adults.

The Chamberlain Middle School Technology Program began in 1989 when the eighth grade mathematics and science teacher received a Christa McAuliffe Fellowship to establish a computer laboratory, with 16 Apple computers, and an enclosed "Macintosh mini-lab."

At the middle school, students use the computers to access information to relate science to their everyday lives. During their unit on meteorology, students use their computers to call MESONET, a statewide weather network. Through a modem students log onto a computer in Norman, Oklahoma to access data that includes over nine types of information which can be used to create current weather maps of Oklahoma. In mathematics class,

students who miss a problem use the computer to create an explanation of how to do the problem correctly. The written explanations are then combined with articles focused on the history of mathematics and imported into a desktop publishing program. Student photographs and other graphics are scanned and imported to create a mathematics newsletter. Chamberlain Publications, that publishes *Chamberlain Science Journal* and *Chamberlain Math Journal*, was established as a science-oriented publishing company run by the students.

Other middle school teachers work with the mathematics/science teacher. English teachers have students write articles in English class, which are then used in the desktop publishing enterprise. In one "computer pen pals" project, students made a stack that included digitized images of themselves, descriptions of their hobbies and interests, and questions they wanted their pen pals to answer. Science students conduct extensive scientific research with the assistance of local scientists, CD ROM and video disc technology, science software, telecommunications, and print media. Students have become so proficient that they conduct workshops for teachers.

Students at the high school also are using technology to facilitate learning: desktop publishing, desktop video applications, HyperCard applications, programming, CD ROM and video disc applications, desktop presentations, data acquisition, animation development, public bulletin boards, and advanced networking applications.

Next year fifteen schools from around Oklahoma will form a telecommunications cooperative that will develop and implement educational applications of the MESONET. Student plans for the cooperative include creating articles and graphics to be combined into the MESONET Educational Newsletter. The newsletter will be sent to each Oklahoma junior high site every nine weeks. Students will use advanced desktop video applications to create two staff development films which focus on the MESONET.

The technology program has long range plans. The next phase of the program includes installing fiber optic cable between the schools to increase the quality and speed of computer communications between students. A National Science Foundation grant will focus on developing teachers' skills. Over a three year period, the grant provides for 45 teachers, 15 teachers each year, to be trained in desktop publishing, implementation of technology in scientific data collection and processing, use of statewide networks (MESONET), and creating HyperCard or multimedia applications. This effort will be sponsored in collaboration with The University of Oklahoma.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

This technology project is growing as more grants are secured. Presently there are 64 Macintosh computers available to high school students. At the middle school, students are

using Apple 2E and Apple 2GS computers, with a Macintosh IIci and another Macintosh. Flat bed scanners, laser printers, and CD-ROM players are available. The program was initially funded through grants, but is now being maintained though state and local funds. The current maintenance cost is minimal, with the long distance phone bill taking the lion's share of operating costs.

**Program Contacts**

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Mr. Richard Beck, Principal

Chamberlain Middle School
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## Alternative Learning Center
## Claremore, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** High-risk students ages 14-21
Former dropouts
Pregnant or parenting students

### Community Description/School Context

Claremore, Oklahoma is a rural community located 20 miles northeast of Tulsa in Rogers County. Approximately 15,000 people live in the community. The economic activity centers around light manufacturing, tourism, service industries, and ranching; many of the residents commute to Tulsa.

One high school, one junior high, and four elementary schools serve approximately 3,300 students enrolled in the district. In addition, the Claremore Alternative Learning Center serves 50 students from Claremore and five other school districts in Rogers County. The students are 75 percent White non-Hispanic, 21 percent Native American, 2 percent Black, and 1 percent Hispanic.

### Program Description

The Claremore Alternative Learning Center (ALC) began in 1984-85 under a grant from the Juvenile Services Department for adjudicated youth. The program grew from a "shoestring budget" and a staff of two teachers and a counselor, to competitive funds, and finally to local funds. The Claremore ALC has served as a model for Oklahoma's dropout programs, and recently was invited to present at a national at-risk conference.

The students, ages 14-21, are from Claremore and surrounding communities. Students are self-referred or referred by parents, their home school, or community. Many are former dropouts, students who have been expelled or suspended, pregnant, or are parenting. Fifty students are served at any given time at the ALC. There is a waiting list, so that slots are immediately filled when students graduate or leave the program. Small classes of no more than 12 students contribute to the family-like atmosphere, and provide ample opportunities for special attention and individualized instruction.

The ALC is accredited through Claremore High School, and students must meet all requirements of the state-mandated curriculum. However, the flexible scheduling and individualized approaches to learning appeal to students who are not successful in a traditional school setting. A course is passed when a student demonstrates mastery of

information presented through learning packets — clock hours of instruction are not counted.

If they are close to 21 years of age, staff members encourage them to obtain their GED, and have even worked with military personnel to provide assistance to students who elect to take this route. Staff members recognize that there are events in the lives of many students which temporarily influence them to drop out of school, and students are given three chances to complete the program.

Teenagers who are parents may care for their children in the cooperatively-run nursery next door. The students pick up assignments from their teachers and work on them while they are in the nursery with their children. They have the opportunity to improve their parenting skills through the parenting curriculum and improve their academic skills through the regular curriculum.

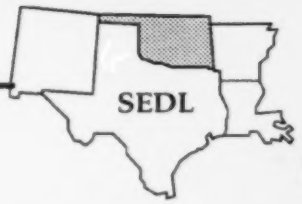
Staff and students form close relationships, which play an important role in motivating students to complete the program. Students who attend school regularly, keep their grades up, and demonstrate responsibility earn incentive credits which they can use to buy soft drinks, snacks, or 15 minutes of early release time. They also earn weekend field trips or retreats. Staff members meet during lunch and after school on Thursdays to total the students' points, and on Fridays students and staff meet together to review the students' progress and to recognize achievement. When a student completes the program, all activities at the school cease, a ceremony is held, the student is photographed, and he or she "signs the wall" as a permanent record.

Staff members evaluate the program by examining the data for all students who enter, and for those students who leave school. Most students complete the program. Of the 99 students enrolled in 1990-91 in the ALC, 20.2 percent graduated, 3 percent returned to regular high school, 8 percent left to try to get the GED, while 19 percent dropped out. Of the 99 enrolled, 12.1 percent were from the Roger County Youth Center. Staff members try to maintain contact with students who leave in an effort to understand why students leave and how the program could be adapted to meet their needs.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Local funds, including tuition for out-of-district students
- Previously was funded through a competitive grant for state funds




**Staffing and staff development**

The cost for last year's program was approximately $143,000, for a staff of one director and four full-time teachers. Indications are that the costs per student are the same those as for any student attending the Claremore Schools.

**Program Contacts**

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## Ready-to-Start: Early At-risk Prevention
## Elmore City Elementary School
## Elmore City, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** 4-year-olds identified as at-risk for school failure, and their parents

### Community Description/School Context

Elmore City is a small town of 493 residents located about 60 miles south of Oklahoma City. The population is fairly stable, with many retired people and many families with limited income. Farming, small businesses, and oil companies are the primary sources of employment. Many who graduate from the high school go to college, and tend to return to the community.

The school is the center of the community. Support for school social events, programs, and sports is widespread, and community members participate regardless of whether or not they have school-aged children.

The school district is small, with a total enrollment of 440 students, kindergarten through twelfth grade. Ten percent of the students are Native Americans and 89 percent are White non-Hispanic. The dropout rate is less than one percent, 25 percent participating in the free lunch program, and 15 percent eligible for special education. There are two facilities, one for grades K-6, and one for grades 7-12. The campuses are a block apart, which permits sharing of staff members and facilities. For example, the Spanish teacher teaches at both schools, and the fifth and sixth grade boys walk to the high school to practice football on the playing field.

### Program Description

Although the Ready to Start program is new, its design and the community's response to it make it a promising practice that deserves recognition. Need for the program was evident in 1990, when school readiness screening scores for 18 out of 21 new kindergarten students indicated developmental delays of four months or more. At the end of the year, half of this class was retained for an additional year in kindergarten. Based on the premise that all children should start school ready to learn, the Ready to Start program focuses on providing parents with the skills and materials they need to provide their children with quality learning experiences.

By training parents to become more effective at preparing their children for school, school officials hope that the children's self-esteem will be positively affected: as a child experiences success, self-esteem is boosted, and the parents' confidence in their parenting skills improves. The family unit is strengthened and the child's life is enriched.

The Ready to Start program is publicized to the entire community, especially during pre-registration and screening of incoming kindergarten students. The program is unique in its program design: parents meet in a classroom to observe a kindergarten teacher model the "lessons" they will be doing with their children during the week.

Once a week the pre-kindergarten children and their parents attend the school for a two-hour session. During the first part of the session, the parents sit in chairs behind their children while the teacher engages the group in activities. Everyone participates. Then the teacher's aide takes the children to do learning center activities while the parents meet with the teacher. During this time, the parents discuss how the activities went during the week, including their child's individual preferences; the upcoming week's activity plans, and how to make adjustments in the activities to accommodate individual differences. Then the entire group reconvenes for the teacher to model the activities for the upcoming week. The session ends with a closing activity and free play time.

The daily activities are planned to take 5 to 15 minutes, but parents report that they usually spend more time, as the children usually want to "play" longer. Each family is provided with a tub full of materials for their activities, and the tubs are reserved for the "special time." The teacher visits the parents in their homes, and parent workshops with speakers on special topics are held during the year. Eight summer sessions ensure that the parents and children will continue to develop skills until the time that children enroll in kindergarten.

At-risk students identified for the program are four or five years old and include those who exhibit delays of four or more months on the Gesell School Readiness Test or have low scores on the Brigance Inventory of Early Development, are from families in poverty, are "latch-key" children (unsupervised after school), or who have experienced legal intervention. In the most recent kindergarten class, 16 out of 19 children had scores indicating developmental delays of four or more months; of these, four children had scores showing delays of more than one year. Students will be post-tested near the end of their kindergarten year, and their results will be compared with those of students who did not participate in the program. The students' attitudes will be measured using the *School Pupil Adjustment Scale* and the *Success Questionnaire*.

Long-term goals or outcomes of the program are that all children will start school ready to learn, that no more kindergarten students will be retained, and that the students will gain confidence, find it easier to separate from their mothers, and be interested in school.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The program costs approximately $16,550, and is funded through the Chapter 2 competitive discretionary program. Testing materials, early childhood materials for the home activities, and supplies cost approximately $3700. Salaries include .30 FTE for the teacher (including summer) and .06 of an FTE (paid hourly) for the teacher's aide. Staff travel for home visits is reimbursed, as is parent transportation of the children to the weekly school sessions. The parent reimbursement encourages the parents to attend, and costs much less than school buses. Consultant costs for the parent workshops and summer utilities are also included in the budget.

**Program Contacts**

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## The Shurley Method
## Hanna Public School
## Hanna, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** At-risk students in grades 1-8

### Community Description/School Context

Hanna is a tiny rural town of about 150 residents, located in McIntosh County, in the Creek Indian Nation. The economy is in serious decline, and many of the residents subsist on federal aid programs. Agriculture is the main source of income, and one of the major employers in town is the U.S. Post Office. Residents commute 20 miles to a nearby town for shopping and medical services.

Hanna Public School serves about 145 students from the town and surrounding areas, from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Most classes are multi-grade levels. The superintendent serves as the elementary principal, and the secondary principal serves as the counselor. The student ethnicity is 50 percent White non-Hispanic, 44 percent Native American, 5 percent black, and 1 percent Hispanic.

### Program Description

Teachers at Hanna Public School were concerned about their students' weaknesses in the areas of oral and written language. Their achievement test scores were below the state average at most grade levels. When the superintendent saw a demonstration of the Shurley method at a conference, he recommended it to the Hanna teachers. In September, 1991, after a one-day training session, teachers began using the Shurley Method to supplement the Language Arts curriculum. All students in grades K-8 participate in the program,

The Shurley Method's focus is on developing English grammar and Language Arts skills in children in grades 1-6. (The seventh and eighth grade teacher adapted the Method for use with the seventh and eighth graders.) Children learn sentence patterns, which are extended each year, and the proper use of adjectives and adverbs. Jingles help children remember the parts of speech, and are especially appealing for lower functioning students.

The Shurley Method requires that children first categorize a sentence into its pattern and then label it (to show the parts of speech). The teacher uses a specific questioning technique, and the students respond in unison. Each lesson is built upon a "give-and-take"

flow of questions and answers, a lot of repetition, and jingles that teach the rules. All students participate, and they readily "latch on" to the new approach. Teachers report that the jingles are concrete examples and serve as excellent memory devices.

The approach is sequential, and the students experience rapid success. In a comparison of language arts scores of the same 10 students enrolled in the program the first year as sixth graders and then as seventh graders, it was found that their average NCE scores increased from 43 in 1991 to 62 in 1992 on the Iowa Test of Basis Skills.

**Staff and staff development**

The Shurley Method is implemented by all of the staff members in grades 1-8 at Hanna Public School. The teachers attended a one-day workshop in which two consultants from Arkansas modeled the method. Minimal cost is associated with the program: teacher's manual includes lesson plans, that may be modified to meet the needs of individual students.

**Contact Information**

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## Project Advantage
## Cushing, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** K-12 students at risk of dropping out

### Community Description/School Context

Project Advantage reaches students in fourteen schools in four rural communities: Cushing, Drumright, Perkins-Tryon, and Ripley public school systems. Three of the communities are located in Payne County (Cushing, Ripley, and Perkins) about 50 miles from metropolitan Tulsa. All of the communities experienced the oil boom and bust. Cushing is the best known for its oil-related pipelines and storage capacity. Payne County includes Stillwater, home of Oklahoma State University.

The school districts' populations vary. The population of Payne County is 89 percent White non-Hispanic, 4 percent Native American, 3 percent Black, and 1 percent Hispanic. In 1992, the Perkins School District served 1,124 students, with 42 percent eligible for free/reduced lunch and a 4 percent rate of high school dropouts. The Ripley School District served 413 students in 1992. There was a 5 percent dropout rate, with 55 percent of the school population eligible for free/reduced lunch. In Drumright, 59 percent of the school's 595 students are eligible for free/reduced lunch, with 5.8 percent of high school students dropping out. The Cushing School district served 1,816 students with 47 percent eligible for free/reduced lunch, and 5 percent of high school students dropping out.

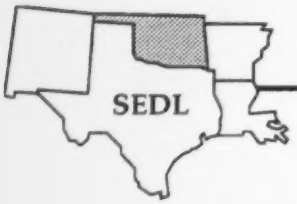
### Program Description

Project Advantage is a model dropout prevention, intervention and recovery system for rural school districts that has been in place since 1988. The model stresses an array of interventions that are implemented at the earliest possible stage of a student's school career. Early identification and intervention are crucial components of this model. Identification of students may be based upon academic, social, or personal factors, such as poor attendance, behavioral problems, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy.

The Project Advantage model includes family counseling, extended day, extended year, and alternative educational components.

**Family/Student Counseling Services**

Counselors are involved in individual and small group counseling sessions, and parent outreach in each district. The counselor locates appropriate referrals and works closely with many outside agencies. The family counselor tracks attendance and grades in order to intervene before at-risk behavior is entrenched.




**After School Enrichment**

After school enrichment is held two or three days a week for elementary students. The program provides an opportunity for students to have hands-on activities that reinforce the reading and math skills taught during the regular school day.

**Homework Assistance**

The Homework Assistance Center (HAC) is designed to prevent students from falling behind. Teachers are available to help students who have requested assistance.

**Summer Programs**

Summer programs are available for elementary and middle school students. The elementary school's program is a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching and learning held in an outdoor setting. All age levels are combined into groups that travel from station to station to learn math, reading, writing, science, and art via the out-of-doors and hands-on activities.

The middle school program focuses on business, relating basic skills to vocations. The program is designed for students who would otherwise not be promoted to the next grade level. One example is a mock radio station that addresses the areas of math, English, history, and writing.

**Alternative Education**

The ADVANTAGE classroom is the rural equivalent of an alternative school. The educational program is flexible and meets individual needs. Some students spend part of the day in vocational or apprenticeship programs, receiving regular credit for their work in the ADVANTAGE program.

In-service training is a big part of Project Advantage. Teachers have been trained in thinking skills, whole language, cooperative learning, increasing student effort, enhancing self-esteem, and parental involvement. Elementary teachers received Project WILD training (teaching in outdoor settings), while secondary teachers received training in working with alienated adolescents.

Community involvement is a major component of Project Advantage. In addition to offering family counseling services, parent education is provided in the areas of drug education, parent seminars, and newspaper parent tips. Community awareness is encouraged at the Family Af-Fair, an informational fair. And, community involvement is encouraged through the Celebrity Reader, Chamber School Connection, and Project Self-Esteem programs.

Grade point, attendance, classes failed, and achievement test data are being collected to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

The program has received both national and local recognition. Project Advantage was presented at the National Dropout Prevention Conference in Atlanta, the National School Boards Conference in San Francisco, and the State Dropout Conference in Tulsa. The program was profiled on local television news and in the *Tulsa World* newspaper.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The Child Service Demonstration Center in Cushing received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program for the four-year Oklahoma Program.

**Sources of funding**

- U.S. Department of Education
- Regular state aid and local district funds
- Special state and private project funds

**Staffing and staff development**

- Alternative classroom teacher for each district
- Family counselors (half-time for each district)
- Classroom teachers for one additional hour after school and three hours per day during the summer

**Program Contact**

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## Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning (REAL)
## Beaver County, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** Juniors and seniors in high school

### Community Description/School Context

Beaver County is the eastern most county in the Oklahoma panhandle located 240 miles northwest of Oklahoma City, 160 miles northeast of Amarillo, Texas, and 220 miles southwest of Wichita, Kansas. The county is home to 6,000 citizens covering 1800 square miles with 94 percent of the population White non-Hispanic, 5 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Native American. The local economy is supported by agriculture and the petroleum industry. Both industries have suffered due to varying weather patterns in the area and the low price of oil and gas. In fact, the population of Beaver County has decreased 10 percent since 1980.

The four high schools in the county—Balko, Beaver, Forgan, and Turpin—form a co-op learning system connected by interactive television. The schools are the heart of the community in all four areas. Two of the communities do not have main streets and the life of the community revolves around the school.

### Program Description

Beaver County was selected as one of 14 sites to pilot the Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning (REAL) program—the only site in Oklahoma and the national pilot for the combination of REAL and interactive television (ITV). Since there has been a declining population in the area, too many students were leaving after graduation, and students were not able to utilize their education in a vocation in the area. It was felt that REAL would allow the schools to offer students an opportunity to acquire skills, information, attitudes, and assistance needed to become successful entrepreneurs. With input from school boards, community and economic development leaders, and parents, REAL began in 1992.

The REAL program has two goals: to give students a chance to research, plan and operate a small business in their community and to develop critical thinking and life skills that students will use no matter what career path they choose. Students apply for enrollment in REAL by taking a profile test and by being recommended by counselors, administrators, program facilitators, and family members. The program is designed for students who have an entrepreneurial "spark" but haven't been motivated to develop this desire.

Beaver County REAL is taught via ITV connecting Balko, Beaver, Forgan, and Turpin. The class is taught in the ITV lab with the facilitator rotating among locations. The students use the ITV lab in several ways. They can film commercials, view materials from other areas of the county, and share ideas with others throughout the county. They learn skills in using a computer, printer, camera, television, and FAX machine.

REAL is a two-year elective course. REAL I and II are taught in one hour blocks. The classroom is turned into a laboratory, where students experiment with their own ideas and abilities. Students have proposed many kinds of businesses. Some examples are a calf feeding business, a car wash, and a clown rental service. The larger goal of the program is to encourage economic development in rural America. Rural students traditionally leave their small communities for urban areas after high school, looking for other opportunities. REAL teaches students that they can find business opportunities in their own back yard.

Community involvement is a vital part of the REAL program. Field trips, trade shows, and visits with local and community business leaders enhance the curriculum. Hands-on experience is a vital part of the program. Community support team members play active support givers providing mentorship, advice, training, and experience to the students.

Local, state, and national support form the links to a strong chain in the REAL program. Local support includes the school administration, businesses in the community, Tri-county Electric, and Panhandle Telephone. On a state level support includes a state REAL office and program coordinator, the Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, the Oklahoma Economic Development, and the Department of Education. Nationally, there is a REAL national office with 15 states connected via a voice mail system utilizing an 800 number and a computer system with a modem. This system provides a vehicle to share business ideas, encouragement, and problems.

The REAL program is evaluated and monitored by the state and national REAL offices. The national office has an extensive evidence-gathering system for measuring the long-term outcomes of the program assessing the students' cognitive knowledge, attitudes, comfort, skills, and behavior. Plans are made to follow-up on students 2 and 5 years after leaving the program to monitor effects of the program.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Panhandle Telephone Co-op
- Oklahoma Association of Electric Co-ops

- State membership to REAL
- Tri-County Electric Co-op
- Public school systems
- Local businesses

**Staffing and staff development**

The staff has attended two-week intensive training sessions during the past two summers. Attending related meetings throughout the year keeps the staff in-tune with meeting the needs of the students and the community.

**Program Contact**

Cletus Carter, Coordinator
Oklahoma REAL Enterprises, Inc.
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Forgan, OK 73938

405/259-6499

## Step 2 Learning Center
## Wewoka Public School District
## Wewoka, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** High school students at risk of dropping out and adults who have dropped out of school

### Community Description/School Context

Wewoka is located approximately sixty-eight miles southeast of Oklahoma City in the heart of the Seminole Nation and serves as the capital of the Seminole Nation. With a population of 4,300 the city is a melting pot of cultures. The population is 67 percent White non-Hispanic, 18 percent Black, and 13 percent Native American.

The Wewoka School District serves free or reduced lunch to 61 percent of its students (compared to a 36 percent statewide average). Mandated achievement test scores are below the state average at every grade level, and below the national average on five of seven tests.

### Program Description

In 1990-91, nine percent of the 210 students at Wewoka High School dropped out. That was nearly double the state average for the year. In fact, the annual average drop out rate has averaged 6.8 percent (also above the state average) for four of the past five years. Wewoka is located near the center of a two county area (Seminole and Hughes counties). This regional area has a total high school enrollment of 2,128 students. The total dropout rate in 1990-91 for the two counties was 109 students, or 5.1 percent.

Organizational meetings were held with a number of community agencies including the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Mental Health of Southern Oklahoma, the Wewoka Police Department, Seminole and Hughes County officials, and the Seminole County Health Department to design a dropout prevention program. These efforts resulted in the Step 2 Learning Project.

The Step (Success Through Educational Programming) 2 Learning Project is a dropout prevention, intervention, and recovery system. Students who attend Step 2 are either referred by their home schools or by local agencies, such as the Department of Human Services, CRCS, and Youth and Family Services. Referrals are also made by concerned citizens who have witnessed the success of the Step 2 Center, and also by students who convince their friends to stay in school or come by and visit the center.

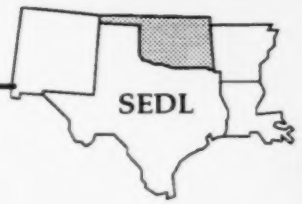
Step 2 has several components. The Step 2 Learning Center is a non-traditional, innovative school, where the instructors understand and can identify with the students and their problems. The Learning Center has a 23 system computer lab equipped with CCC (Computer Curriculum Corporation) software system. The system is designed to allow each student to work at his/her own pace. Four teachers teach core classes (math, English, science, and history) providing students with individualized instruction in a small class setting.

Life skills are an important part of the Step 2 Program. Area business leaders conduct interviewing sessions, as well as hiring some students for part-time work. The CCC System lab includes a life skills component. The JTPA (Jobs Training Partnership Act) program and the area Vo-Tech school work closely with students in the development of life skills.

In addition, the P.A.T. (Parents as Teachers) component is designed to increase parent involvement in the educational process. Parents are taught techniques to use when working with their children, ages 0 to 3. Parent educators instruct parents in ways to teach their children new skills and how to make inexpensive toys. Parents meet together and share their successes and failures. The parent successes serve as a form of self-evaluation.

The administration and teachers work hand-in-hand to make Step 2 a success. The Step 2 Center is governed by an advisory committee which aids in policy making. The committee is made up of members of the business community, local agencies, student representatives, a state representative, and the superintendent of the Wewoka Public Schools. They meet once a month to plan, discuss, and solve problems as they arise.

Since opening its doors in February 1991, the Step 2 Learning Center has served 109 students. The 1992-93 school year proved to be successful as four seniors received diplomas from their home schools and four students completed their GED requirements. The Center served 70 students during the 92-93 year and many of those students plan to return in August. The Center has contracted with an independent evaluator from the Child Service Demonstration Center in Cushing, Oklahoma to evaluate the program. The effectiveness of the project and its related activities will be measured descriptively in terms of the students served—their socio-economic background, attendance, achievement, and retention rates; services provided and their costs; the extent of involvement of parents, community members, and agency representatives; staff training activities; and the degree of program implementation. Reduced dropout rates, absenteeism, and disciplinary action, along with improved achievement test levels and course completion will provide the determination of success.




## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Federal Dropout Demonstration Assistance Grant
- State Alternative Education Grant
- In-kind contributions from sources such as the City of Wewoka; Action, Inc.; and Oklahoma Gas & Electric

### Staffing and staff development

- Full-time director
- Counselor/math instructor
- English, science, and history instructors
- Full-time coordinator for P.A.T. program
- Three P.A.T. educators
- Office manager

All staff are required to attend classes for staff development. Alternative Education meetings are held in conjunction with the state teachers' meeting each year. The P.A.T. staff are required to attend regular update sessions to upgrade certification.

## Program Contact

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The Step 2 Learning Project
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Wewoka, OK 74884
405/257-6404
405/257-5476 (FAX)

## Parents Add to Learning Success (PALS)
## Broken Bow, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** K-5 at-risk students

### Community Description/School Context

Broken Bow is a small, rural town of approximately 3,000 people in extreme Southeast Oklahoma. It is 220 miles Southeast of Oklahoma City, 220 miles Southwest of Little Rock, and 220 miles Northeast of Dallas.

The school district has an enrollment of 1867 students in kindergarten through twelfth grad — 13 percent are Black; 50 percent White non-Hispanic; 36 percent Native American; and 1 percent Hispanic. A substantial number of the students, 66 percent, are eligible and participate in the free/reduced lunch program. They report a dropout rate of 6 percent.

### Program Description

The PALS (Parents Add to Learning Sucess) program was initiated in 1989 as an effort to increase parent participation in the learning process and to establish a greater rapport between parents and school staff. Before PALS there was little interaction between parents and school. It is reported that many parents did not feel welcome at school.

All students qualify for participation in the PALS program. Several components work together to make PALS a success. These include monthly parent meetings, a computer checkout system, SHARE (Stay Home And Read Evenings), and a summer school program.

### Parent Meetings

Often Parent-Teacher organizations have a strong focus on what parents can do for the school (e.g., fundraising events to purchase needed equipment or supplies, organize teacher appreciation events, etc.). The PALS parent meetings are centered around addressing parent needs/concerns/issues and helping them to be more involved in their children's education. The goal of these meetings is to foster ongoing, direct parent/teacher communication and to present timely content. Topics such as positive discipline techniques, study skills, learning styles and family dynamics have been addressed. Sometimes, "make-and-take" workshop activities are conducted to provide parents with activities that they can then do with their children at home. At times the meetings include an opportunity for parents to visit teachers in their children's classrooms.

Parent attendance in these meetings has increased to an average of 100 parents per gathering. To enhance attendance the school provides various incentives, including door prizes for parents and student prizes (popcorn, ice cream parties, etc.) for those classrooms with the largest percent of parent attendance.

Each meeting has a parent evaluation component. The school also surveys parents at least annually to determine what topics they would like to have presented, thereby insuring that topics of interest and felt needs are addressed. Parents and other community members do some of the programs and/or act as resource consultants.

**Computer checkout**

Twelve computers, including educational software, are available to parents for one-week checkout periods for their 1-5 grade children. This checkout program is coordinated through the school library. Parents are oriented on how to use the computers and software early in the school year at one of the parent meetings. Individual orientations are also done as needed by the school librarian as parents come in to check out the computers. The goal of this component of the PALS program is multifold. It fosters greater parental involvement in their children's education; it provides remedial and enrichment opportunities for students; and it helps to develop "computer literacy" for both parents and students.

**SHARE (Stay Home And Read Evenings)**

Coordinated by classroom teachers, the SHARE program provides an on-going reading challenge for students throughout the year. It requires parents and children to read together a total of 2700 minutes (an average of about 15 minutes per day 5 days per week throughout the school year). A major, day-long field trip is provided for the families of the students who complete the 2700 minutes. Certificates and ribbons are also awarded.

**Summer program**

The summer program contains a fairly traditional basic skills/content remediation agenda for any K-5 student needing extra help. However, there is also an enrichment program open to all interested students. Parents are encouraged to be involved by providing demonstrations, by working individually or in small groups with children, and by being volunteers in other supportive ways. Similar parent involvement occurs throughout the school year.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

PALS is a teacher implemented program coordinated by the building administrator. Little staff development is required beyond a basic orientation for parents and teachers. The various PALS components are modified as a result of the monthly parent evaluations, yearly parent program requests, parent/student/teacher surveys.

**Sources of funding**

There are initial expenses to start up the program. The greatest expense is for the computers and software for the check-out program. However, once these initial expenses are covered, the ongoing expenses are manageable. The PALS program currently runs on a maintenance budget of about $7,000. This covers the costs of supplies (scissors, tape, staples, construction paper, drawing paper, markers, rulers, etc.), equipment, stipends for speakers, door prizes for parent meetings, and the SHARE expenses, including the field trip. Costs are provided for by:

- Chapter funds
- Grants
- General fund

**Staffing and staff development**

An initial PALS orientation meeting is conducted for all new teachers. This meeting provides an overview of the various facets of the PALS program and training in how to manage the SHARE program for their students. Some staff will be involved in the parent meeting presentations as they might have particular expertise. Other presentations may be made by others (e.g., McCurtain County Educational Coop staff, city public librarian, mental health professionals, medical center personnel, parents and members of various civic groups).

**Program Contact**

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## Changing Expectations
## Indianola, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** K-12 at-risk students

**Community Description/School Context**

Changing Expectations is a collaborative effort to identify and provide services to at-risk students. Canadian, Haileyville, Indianola, and Kiowa are four small, rural communities, each approximately 20 miles from McAlister (population 16,500) in southeastern Oklahoma. They range in size from 170 to 900 in population. Because of the small size of the four communities, each school district has one K-12 school complex.

According to the 1990 census data, these communities are predominantly White non-Hispanic (82-92 percent), with most of the remaining residents being Native American. There are very few Black, Asian, or Hispanic people in these communities.

The school district boundaries for these four communities incorporate much of the surrounding countryside, with its rural inhabitants. Many students are bused into town from these outlying areas. In all about 1,600 students are enrolled. The ethnic demographics of these four districts vary considerably. However, overall percentages show that approximately 1percent of the students are Black, with 25 percent Native American and the remaining 74 percent White non hispanic. About 50 percent of all the students participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

**Program Description**

"Changing Expectations"(CE) began in 1988 as an identification and intervention program for students who are at risk of dropping out of school. It was noticed that, even with the various state and federal programs (special education, Chapter I, etc.) some students were "falling through the cracks." Further, there were few resources to monitor dropouts or to provide any special services to these students before or after they dropped out. As a result the superintendents of four local schools decided to work together to improve this sitution.

Through a cooperative arrangement among the districts Changing Expectations was implemented. The overall objective was to change student attitudes about school and increase their motivation by providing them with more personalized attention and academic success. Specific goals include:

1. To enable participating schools to identify students currently at risk of dropping out of school;
2. To provide prevention services to students who are identified as at risk of dropping out of school;
3. To provide all students with intervention services including the development of positive expectations;
4. To institute a model data collection system for rural schools to monitor students who drop out of school;
5. To encourage all students under age 21 who have dropped out to re-enter school and complete their education;
6. To evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the CE program.

Through a combination of federal grant moneys for dropout prevention and some local district funds (managed and disbursed by one of the school districts), CE began. The program provides tutoring, counseling, summer school, motivational speakers, career explorations, field trips and other services.

**Data collection and management**

Some of the program funds were used initially to purchase and implement for each school district a computer program, enabling them keep track of student progress by collecting and recording data on each student enrolled. The schools could then assess pertinent information (standardized test scores, grades, absences, discipline referrals, etc.) to identify which students were at risk. This system also enhances the capacity of the CE teaching and counseling staff to monitor and follow up on student progress as they work with them and afterward.

In addition to using the data management system to identify potential students for CE, the program staff also encourage referrals. Students may be referred by teachers, parents, outside agencies (juvenile authorities, Department of Human Services, etc.), other school personnel, or the students themselves.

**Tutoring and counseling**

Each school has a teacher and a half-time paraprofessional. These staff work with identified students by providing tutorial and remedial help to them in a traditional "pullout" program format. These students get daily individualized attention and help with their coursework. The teachers also maintain ongoing communication with other teachers and with the home (letters, phone calls, home visits, etc.) to keep parents informed and involved.

Two high school seniors in each school district also serve as tutors for one hour a day. As a reward for their services, these seniors receive a small cash "bonus" at the end of the year as well as a partial scholarship to a local state college.

Although some students are targeted for intensive, ongoing tutorial or remedial help, the CE teacher and other tutors are available to all students for assistance as needed. The teaching staff work with "whoever shows up."

A half-time counselor at each school is an essential part of the CE staff. They provide individual counseling to students and parents as needed. They also help identify students for program inclusion, follow up on past students, encourage dropouts to re-enter school to graduate or complete the GED, help families to connect with available social services that may be needed, and work as a liaison between students and/or parents and the school.

**Other services**

In addition to the academic and counseling interventions provided by CE staff, other "fun" activities are planned on a regular basis. Motivating and entertaining speakers are brought into the school to speak to and interact with students. Interesting and informative field trips are planned to expose students to a wide array of experiences to which they probably would not have had access otherwise. Students are also involved in various career-oriented activities. The summer school program is under the jurisdiction of the CE program. Each of these activities and events is designed to foster greater interest in school and closer, more personal relationships among teachers, students, and parents.

## Program Evaluation

The four superintendents and two parents from each school district meet collectively on a monthly basis to assess the program's effectiveness. Data collection and management is ongoing. The counselors and CE teachers actively follow up all students (past and present) involved in the program to determine how they are doing academically.

## Program Impementation Specifics

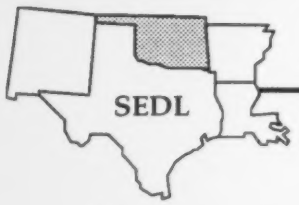
**Sources of funding**

Federal grant
Local district funds channeled through the Indianola school district

**Staffing and staff development**

The Changing Expectations staff include:

- Program Director
- Two counselors (each serving two school districts on a half-time basis)
- Four half-time paraprofessionals
- Two high school seniors from each school district serve as tutors




All school staff rèceive inservice training about the Changing Expectations program. They are informed of the indicators the program is looking for and updated referral forms. The CE staff attend available workshops and seminars related to problems that could contribute to students dropping out of school.

**Program Contact**

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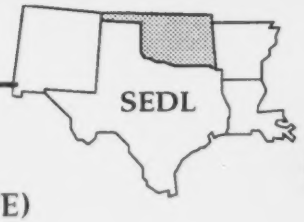
Indianola, OK 74442-1106
918/823-4244
918/823-4234 (Fax)




## School And Family Enrichment Project (SAFE)
## Garfield County, Oklahoma

**Target At-risk Population:** K-12 at-risk students

### Community Description/School Context

Garfield is a largely rural county in North Central Oklahoma. There is a total county-wide school enrollment of slightly more than 10,000 students. About two-thirds of these students are enrolled in the Enid Public School system with the remaining 3,000-3,500 disbursed among the the other eight school districts of the county. The SAFE project serves Enid (population 35,000) and seven of the other eight school districts in Garfield County.

The ethnic breakdown of the schools in the county vary from district to district. Overall, about 89 percent are White non-Hispanic with 5 percent Black, 3 percent Native American, 1.5 percent Asian, and 1.5 percent Hispanic. Roughly 27 percent of the students in Garfield County participate in the free/reduced lunch program. And in the 1990-91 school year, there was an overall high school dropout rate for the county of 4.7 percent.

### Program Description

In the later 1980's a coalition of service organizations in the Enid, Oklahoma area were concerned that although social services were available to needy families in the area, the people who could benefit from these services were frequently unknowledgeable about or unable to access them. The SAFE (School And Family Enrichment) concept developed and grew out of community/school dialogue over a one-year period to address this concern.

As a result of this planning process, project SAFE began in 1989. Six school family counselors serve as the "backbone" of the project. These clinically trained counselors assist at-risk students and their families in dealing with social, emotional, and educational difficulties. Services include the assessment and identification of at-risk students, development of individualized intervention plans, home visits, parent training, and individual/group/family counseling. Because the focus of SAFE is early intervention, most of the counselors' focus is on younger students and their families. However, counselors are available for the entire K-12 range.

**Early identification and assessment**

Counselors work closely with teachers, guidance staff, parents and others in the earlyh identification and assessment of children with social, emotional, or educational problems. From these assessments comprehensive treatment plans are developed as needed.



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**Counseling**

SAFE counselors provide individual, group, and family counseling to assist children and families deal with behavior problems. They work together to identify and mobilize family resources to promote better school functioning. This is accomplished through a variety of intervention strategies, including short-term interventions, teacher consultations, crisis intervention, and large group prevention program. For student interventions SAFE counselors have a major concern on developing positive self-esteem.

**Parental support**

SAFE staff work to develop strong parental support for their children's education at school and to develop and improve parenting skills at home.

**Advocacy**

Often there are misunderstandings and miscommunications between schools and families. One way in which SAFE counselors help students and families is by supporting and assisting them as they interact with school and community organizations.

**Service coordination, referral, and follow-up**

SAFE staff also help by acting as the facilitator in coordinating services for students and families, both within the school and among the family, the school. and other agencies. This sometimes involves referring children and families to other agencies for services that might be needed to stabilize and strengthen family functioning. It also involves monitoring, recording and following up on the outcomes of these integrated efforts to provide appropriate services to students and their families.

## Evaluation Results

A SAFE advisory board consists of members representing each of the participating school districts as well as representatives of the various social service agencies in Garfield County. The board meets monthly to monitor ongoing evaluation efforts and statistical data. They also provide problem-solving support. Another source of evaluative input comes from the parents who have received SAFE services. This input comes in the form of year-end evaluations.

As a result of the three years that SAFE has been in operation, a number of variables have been compared to a community similar to Enid but without the services provided by SAFE personnel, although there are various other at-risk services to students both in Enid and in the comparison school. This makes a clear comparison of variables across school somewhat "muddy." However, there were statistically significant results which reflect favorably on the SAFE program in number of absences, number of classes failed, grade point average, and standardized test scores.

Similar results were found in the results of a three-year within-site study. SAFE students reduced absences and number of failed classes over the three-year period. Measures of self-esteem also saw improvement.

**Program Impementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

Funding is primarily through the Oklahoma Department of Education. SAFE also receives (and still depends on) financial or in-kind support from several community entities, including:

- Enid Area Metropolitan Area Human Service Commission
- Enid Public Schools
- Junior Welfare League
- City of Enid
- County of Garfield
- United Way of Northwest Oklahoma
- Meadowlake Hospital
- Youth and Family Services
- Department of Human Services
- Community Development Support Association
- Private benefactors

**Staffing and staff development**

Six clinically trained, school/family counselors provide services to students and families within the nine school districts in Garfield County.

**Program Contact**

Kim Poslick, Counselor
Garfield County SAFE
Roosevelt Center
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Enid, OK 73701
405/249-3543

## LINCOLN ALTERNATIVE ACADEMY
**Stillwater, Oklahoma**

**Target At-Risk Population:** High School Dropouts

**Community Description/School Context**

Stillwater, Oklahoma is a mid-size town of about 37,500, located approximately 65 miles west of Tulsa and 60 miles north of Oklahoma City. Oklahoma State University (enrollment of about 19,500) is located in Stillwater, and serves as a significant economic and educational resource to the community. A few small industries and a vocational-technical school are also located there.

The Stillwater Public School System consists of a high school (grades 10-12), a junior high (8-9), one middle school (6-7) and six elementary schools. The Lincoln Alternative Academy, described below, is also a part of the school district. The student population district-wide is 5 percent Black, 1 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian, 5 percent Native American, and 85 percent White. About 28 percent of the student population participate in the free/reduced lunch.

**Program Description**

The Lincoln Alternative Academy opened as a dropout recovery program in October, 1992 with 22 students. Youth and young adult high school dropouts between the ages of 14 and 21 may attend from Stillwater or from other, more rural communities in the county and surrounding area. The current enrollment is approximately 80. The students attending the academy have typically dropped out previously to have babies or to get jobs. Others left school because of school failure or because they did not fit well into the traditional high school environment. Although the ethnic make-up of the school approximates the district as a whole, almost all (98 percent) of the students at the academy qualify for the free/reduced lunch program.

Students enrolled in the Lincoln Academy complete the same course requirements that other high school students must complete to graduate (22 units). The curriculum includes mathematics through Algebra II, science, social studies, English, and business/technology. Students may also be enrolled at a local vocational/technical school and/or concurrently enrolled at other institutes of higher learning (Oklahoma State University, etc.). A summer program allows for year-round learning opportunities.

Once high school dropouts decide to return to school, the Lincoln Alternative Academy has been able to keep approximately 75 percent of them in school. This is

accomplished through many means. The school environment is smaller and much more personal. School schedules are adjustable and students work at their own pace, allowing them to meet their other family and/or job responsibilities. Students do not earn credit for courses by putting in the required time (a semester or a year). Instead they work at their own pace on specific course objectives. When they demonstrate mastery of a particular objective (at least 80 percent mastery), they move on to the next. Instruction is individualized to meet student needs and includes a strong computer-assisted component, particularly for mathematics and business. Community service programs and opportunities for career/vocational training are also available.

The academy works in concert with the Department of Human Services, the Payne County Youth Shelter, local medical and law enforcement agencies, and churches as well as other private organizations and public service agencies to enhance the quality of service to its students. The cooperative arrangement that the academy has with other smaller school districts also allows for dropouts from neighboring communities to enroll and fully participate. Upon completing high school graduation requirements, students have the option of graduating from the Stillwater school system or their own home community school.

The faculty and staff of the academy believe that building self-esteem, encouraging involvement, and developing positive attitudes are crucial elements for the success of their students. The school works hard to keep students in school through extensive contact with the home (phone contacts, letters, home visits). A full-time counselor works at the school. Further, various student recognition programs have also been implemented, including:

- Student Ambassadors—6 students per month are selected as "ambassadors," promoting the academy's program to civic groups, legislative committees, school boards, etc.
- Student of the Month—a community civic organization, the Exchange Club, invites a student to share with them about their new school experiences at their monthly club meeting.
- Honor roll.
- Monthly night seminars are sponsored, featuring consultants from the community.
- A church-based thrift shop provides scholarship funds, as needed, for students pursuing concurrent enrollment with OSU.
- An "Employee of the Month" program for working students
- A Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) chapter.
- A "Parent, Guardian, Spouse, or Significant Other of the Year" recognition program—selected by the Lincoln Academy advisory board from student nominations

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The program is funded through already existing funds allotted to the district. The Oklahoma State Department of Education has also made available additional funding grants for alternative education programs. The Lincoln Alternative Academy has received the state's largest grant awarded for each of the two years that the program has existed. A third source of funding has come from a vocational/technical grant.

| | |
|---|---|
| Stillwater Education Foundation contribution | $9,000 |
| State Department of Education grant | $100,000 |
| Vocational/technical grant | $10,000 |

Other participating school districts do not provide direct funding, but allow the Stillwater system to count their participating students in their ADA/ADM headcounts (the basis on which they receive state funding).

**Staffing and staff development**

The Lincoln Alternative Academy is staffed as follows:

1 social studies teacher
1 science teacher
1 business/vocational teacher
1 1/3 English teachers
1/2 math teacher
1 counselor
1 psychologist/therapist
1 administrator

Through funds made available from the Oklahoma Teacher Assistance Center (OTAC), trainers from the DeLaSalle program in Kansas City, Missouri (the alternative school model adopted by the Lincoln Academy) provided initial and follow-up staff development for academy staff. In fact, the principal of the academy if now a certified trainer for the DeLaSalle model.

**Program Contact**

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Stillwater, OK 74074

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**BLOCK SCHEDULING**
**Wewoka High School**
**Wewoka, Oklahoma**

**Target At-Risk Population:** All High School Students

**Community Description/School Context**

Wewoka, Oklahoma is a rural community of less than 5,000, located approximately 60 miles east and south of Oklahoma City. The major economic base for the region around Wewoka is the oil industry. Due to the depressed nature of this industry, the overall economy of the area is also depressed. A substantial portion of the population live in poverty.

With less than 900 students, the Wewoka Public School System consists of one high school, a middle school, and an elementary school. The student population is ethnically diverse with 31 percent Black, 1 percent Asian, 26 percent Native American, and 41 percent White. Approximately 75 percent of the student population participate in the free/reduced lunch program.

**Program Description**

Wewoka High School implemented block scheduling at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year. Block scheduling is a way to adjust the daily school schedule. Instead of the six traditional 50-minute class periods per day, Wewoka changed to a 4-period school day. Each class period is one hour and twenty-five minutes long. In each class, a year's content is compressed into a semester. Consequently, students may earn 8 credits toward graduation per year (four in the fall semester and four in the spring) rather than the 6 that could be earned previously. Students who began as freshmen when the block scheduling program was first implemented will need 26 high school credits to graduate. With 32 total credits possible in four years, students are under less pressure in that there is some "breathing room." If a student fails a particular course, he/she may retake it another semester (if it is a required course) and still be on track for graduation. Also, there is flexibility in allowing students the option to work part-time or to take courses at a local vocational-technical school and still be able to earn the required credits for graduation within four years.

The schedule change has made a difference for both students and teachers. Students have only 4 courses to deal with per semester instead of 6 or 7. This, coupled with the

longer time per day in class, has cut down the time needed to complete daily homework assignments. Teachers also report positive reactions because they have only 3 periods each day for which to prepare. Consequently, they have fewer total students each semester and a longer planning period each day. This allows them the opportunity to invest more time with each of their students and to take less work home with them at night.

The increased time in class has required teachers to modify how they teach. Class periods are to long simply to lecture. Therefore, they have had to find ways to get students more actively involved in the learning process. Cooperative learning groups, major class projects, "hands-on" activities, lab experiments, etc. are some strategies employed by teachers on a more regular basis.

One problem faced by some rural schools as they investigate the possibility of block scheduling is that it is infeasible due to an incompatibility of schedules between schools who "share" staff. For instance, scheduling differences in classes between a high school and a junior high or middle school have been an obstacle for those staff who teach courses at both schools. This situation was not a problem in Wewoka because the middle school ran on a 7-period day with 45 minute classes. By careful "juggling," shared faculty schedules were adapted to work with both middle school and high school daily schedules. Further, due to the success of the block scheduling plan at the high school, the middle school also adopted a similar block scheduling format for the 1994-95 school year.

One potential problem encountered pertains to the timing of mandated state testing. The current time for these tests is in March. At this point in the school year, the traditional school schedule would have covered approximately 75 percent of the content in all courses being taken by students. However, in a block scheduling format some students will have completed all course objectives for the year in classes taken in the fall, but only half of the content in their spring classes. Further, for courses taken in the fall semester, there will have been a lapse of 2.5 months since they were involved in the content. Consequently, it is speculated that students under block scheduling may not perform on state testing as well as others in a more traditional scheduling structure. This potential concern is being monitored by Wewoka administration to determine if it is, indeed, a problem.

On the other hand, as a result of the organizational change to block scheduling, Wewoka school personnel report that students are more successful, fewer students are failing courses, attendance rates have increased, eligibility for extracurricular activities has increased, and student attitudes appear more positive. Also, as teachers have become accustomed to the longer class periods, course contents have become more interesting and challenging because students have become more actively involved in the learning process (rather than simply passively listening to a lecture day after day).

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

Because block scheduling is essentially an organizational change, no additional funding is required.

**Staffing and staff development**

This organizational change has required no additional staff. Staff development has consisted primarily of an orientation session. However, school leadership suggest that schools pursuing block scheduling might include staff development in the areas of alternative teaching methodologies to the traditional direct instruction model. Such approaches might include cooperative learning strategies, discovery learning techniques, learning styles modifications, team teaching, etc.

**Program Contact**

Mr. John Herzig, Principal
Wewoka High School
P. O. Box 870
Wewoka, OK 74884

405/257-5473
FAX: 405/257-5476

# Compensatory Education Plan
# Bells Independent School District
# Bells, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Dropouts
Identified at-risk students
Grades K-12

## Community Description/School Context

Bells, Texas is located approximately 60 miles due north of Dallas in Grayson County. With a population of 900, the community is close-knit and very responsive to school concerns. The primary vehicle for community input and participation is an advisory team comprised of parents who meet once a month with administrators and teachers before each board meeting, and a separate group of business and community leaders who meet weekly. An additional source of community involvement comes from students attending Austin College, a small four-year institution located in Sherman about 12 miles from Bells.

The student enrollment is 550 and is currently 100 percent White non-Hispanic.

## Program Description

In 1989 the estimated retention rate of students performing at all grade levels was pushing 40 percent. Today the retention rate is approximately 12 percent and declining. Although officially this at-risk program is just being formalized, it has been underway since 1988 when a resourceful and innovative team of educators came together to resolve their district's problems.

The Bells ISD Compensatory Education Plan features two components at the elementary campus (tutorial and enrichment) and four components (tutorial, enrichment, social, and vocational) at the middle school and high school. The basic premise is that all students can learn through a holistic approach to learning. The instructional leaders of the district realized that a paradigm shift in thinking had to occur to accomplish their vision of success. They adopted a new philosophy: "If children don't learn the way we teach, then we must teach them the way they learn."

Students are identified using available information from the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), scores from the checklist of mastery from Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)/Norm-referenced Assessment Program for Texas (NAPT), and other informal and

standardized assessment data. Individual data is maintained on each identified student. This year the district began to implement the *Learning Environment Inventory* as an assessment measure. Strategies utilized by the teachers are dependent on the learning styles identified by the *Learning Styles Inventory* (Dunn & Dunn) of the student. Reteaching incorporates a variety of methodologies and strategies designed to respect the students' preferred learning styles. Examples of these strategies include:

- peer tutoring
- study groups
- tactile/kinesthetic materials
- individualized instruction
- whole language
- global techniques
- problem solving
- reading strategies

**Elementary Level**

This two-component (tutorial and enrichment) offering is based on the identification of student needs for remediation, acceleration, and enrichment. An integrated curriculum approach utilizing literary works such as *Heidi*, *Charlotte's Web*, and *The Chronicles of Narnia* allows all students to be working on similar content at different functioning levels. Field trips are conducted to enhance the experiential background of the students. Higher-order thinking skills are taught and incorporated at all levels of the program.

**Middle and High School Level**

This four-component offering is based on a clear understanding of the differences inherent in students with specific skill deficits and those students who fail to grasp or understand content. Using a thirty minute block of time available on a daily basis, all students are assigned to a component on a rotational basis every six weeks. Teacher-elected team leaders head each of the four components, providing motivation and coordination for all other staff, including two tutors from Austin College and five community volunteers. After-school tutoring is provided by Austin College students for skill-deficient students, and the students who need reteaching receive services two days per week by certified content area teachers.

The four components at the middle and high school are:

- **Tutorial** - Weaknesses are identified here
  Non-Mastery of subject matter based on grades
  Skill deficiency (ITBS)
  Skill deficiency (TAAS)
  At-risk (state criteria)

- **Enrichment** - Students are rotated through each of these categories as an "enrichment" to the regular curriculum
  - Projects related to interest
  - Higher order thinking skills
  - Study skills for academic excellence
  - College entrance test preparation
  - Strategy building

- **Social**
  - Community service (Focus is on team work, living together as a community and self-exploration.)
    - Cross-age/peer tutoring
    - Community clean up
    - Geriatric service
  - "Be Excellent to One Another" concept encouraged
  - Comprehensive Health
  - True Colors (a program focused on the value of individual differences)

- **Vocational**
  - Assessment
    - Interest
    - Aptitude
  - Career Exploration
    - Speakers from community and surrounding businesses
    - Field trips

Long term plans include devoting more time to parent outreach and to systemic changes which affect everyone, especially innovative techniques and strategies that make learning more fun.

While drop-out rate and failure/retention rate have increased slightly, records show that seniors not passing TAAS do not have to be retested as much and are, therefore, passing the exit-level test sooner than in previous years.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The funding for this program comes from the district's compensatory allotment. Five of the community volunteers provide daily assistance with clerical duties, and two Austin College students per semester provide tutoring and support services for students. Education majors may complete some of their course work by volunteering to provide tutoring to students in the program. Counselors provide approximately 18 hours of

training throughout the year to all teachers and tutors participating in the program. These days are a part of the regularly scheduled staff development days. Local in-service is credited to teachers who participate outside the regular school day.

**Program Contacts**

Mr. Joe Stubblefield, Superintendent
903/965-7721

Ms. Lynda Lewis, Counselor
903/965-7315

Bells ISD
P.O. Box 7
Bells, TX 75414-0007

# Building Bridges: A Home-Based Program for Migrant Three Year Olds Dimmitt Independent School District Dimmitt, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Migrant families
3 year old migrant children

## Community Description/School Context

The Texas Panhandle is homeland for the residents of Dimmitt, a primarily cattle-ranching and agricultural community located 65 miles south of Amarillo. The nature of their economy creates a demand for seasonal workers and consequently has created a large migrant population. Dimmitt has a total district enrollment of approximately 1,548 students, of whom 65 percent are Hispanic, 30 percent are White non-Hispanic, and 4 percent are black. Fifty-seven percent of the students are from low-income families.

## Program Description

The Dimmitt *Building Bridges* program is an example of a state-developed home-based enrichment and education program that is implemented for migrant three-year-olds. Success of the program is attributed to communication, coordination, and ongoing support from the Migrant Council, comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and volunteers. The program's strength lies in close relationships between the parent trainers and the mothers of the three year olds.

The *Building Bridges* program is based on the premise that the parent is the child's first teacher. The more knowledgeable the parent is about child development and growth, the better opportunity the child has for developing language and increasing intellectual potential.

The program consists entirely of activities taught at home that are designed to promote interaction between caregiver and child and to provide opportunities for children to use language to label items and to observe people, places, and things. Children also listen to stories in English and Spanish learn to compare, sort, classify, anticipate outcomes, and solve problems.

Through weekly home visits, the "parent trainer" or "home educator" involves the parents so that they feel comfortable working with the child. Each session includes a review of a prior activity, demonstration of a new activity, discussions about child

development theory, and extended activities. In addition to the home visits, there are monthly parent meetings for all participants that provide opportunities for parents to meet and exchange experiences, observe their children interacting, and hear guest speakers present pertinent information.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

The *Building Bridges* program was developed in 1988 in response to a federal migrant education mandate (Chapter 1) that services must be provided for three-year-old migrant children. At that time the Texas Education Agency (TEA) set aside a special project fund to develop the program, initiate pilot sites, provide support to each pilot program, and develop initial training materials. The initial thrust of the program was a collaborative effort between TEA and Region I Education Service Center (ESC). To ensure statewide access to the *Building Bridges* program, Region I Migrant Specialists trained a minimum of two educators from each of the regional ESC service areas. A designated consultant at each of the 20 ESCs was trained to be the information provider and contact person for the project.

In Dimmitt, the project was initiated in 1990. Preliminary and informal observations indicate that children are more ready for school.

**Program Contacts**

*Building Bridges* is a part of a tri-level initiative being implemented in the state of Texas. The following people will be able to provide in-depth information regarding state, regional and local level participation.

**State:**

Migrant Education Specialist
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701
512/463-9067

**Regional:**

LeRoy Jackson
Region I Education Service Center
1900 W. Schunior
Edinburg, TX 78539
210/383-5611

**Local:**

Doricell Davis
Dimmitt ISD
608 W. Halsell St.
Dimmitt, TX 79027-1798
806/647-3101
Fax: 806/647-5433

## Success Strategies for At-Risk Students
## Frisco Independent School District
## Frisco, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:**

Any student in high school, experiencing learning difficulties or considered to be a low-achiever
Bilingual students
ESL students
Special education students

### Community Description/School Context

The mid-sized town of Frisco, population approximately 8,000, is located 25 miles north of Dallas. There are quite a few small businesses located in downtown Frisco. Additionally, two large corporations, Frito Lay and Electronic Data Systems, recently located in the community. Collin County Community College is under construction and scheduled to open in January 1993.

Frisco ISD's enrollment is just over 1300 students, approximately 350 are high school students. The faculty has good relationships with the families in the community. Sixty-eight percent of the students are White non-Hispanic, approximately 30 percent are Hispanic and 3 percent are Black. Twenty-three percent of the students are from low-income families.

### Program Description

Initiated as a part-time program, the Success Strategies for At-risk Students Program is now a full-time one since 1989 and uses a model program approach based on research and application of several areas:

- learning styles
- curriculum modification
- multi-sensory teaching
- tactile/kinesthetic resources

The focus of the program is on the learning styles of at-risk students and what can be done to turn underachievers around academically. The number of student participating in the program average from 20-25 students annually. Students are assessed and identified with the Dunn, Dunn, and Price *Learning Styles Inventory (LSI)*, which identifies 21 separate elements related to student learning styles. Five of these elements are considered to be critical when dealing with low-achievers in the classroom:

- preference or need for low light
- preference or need for an informal classroom design
- built on students' perceptual strengths — particularly tactile and kinesthetic
- encourages global thinking and learning
- preference or need to learn and concentrate in the late morning and early afternoon

The information or essential elements that are taught is the same curriculum that has always been required, however, the students' improvement seems to be attributed to *how* the information is presented and to changes made in the classroom environment. Teaching strategies include all types of global learning — addressing the needs of the right-brained students who do not process thoughts sequentially, as analytic students do. Lessons introduce key concepts and establish relevance through stories and illustrations, which include many opportunities for active learning. Students work with recorded books, and supplement their reading with kinesthetic activities; for example, acting out what the words mean after they read them in context.

By modifying the traditional curriculum and matching instruction and school structures to student learning styles, classrooms have been created that are manageable yet energizing and empowering for teachers as well as their students.

The classroom environment reflects changes for learning styles in several ways. To accommodate students' preferences for bright and low lighting, the teachers have disconnected one row of lights and in another row placed fireproof transparent pink paper over the lights. The other rows remain with the standard fluorescent lighting. For informal design, the teachers have included video floor chairs and several folding lawn chairs. Tables are used for small group activities, and desks are provided for students who prefer the formal design.

Over the year, teachers through informal observation have noticed that students are spending more time on task and less time procrastinating, and there are fewer behavior problems. Nine students experiencing problems with the mathematics section of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), were able to pass the exit level mostly in part of the collaboration of the mathematics teacher with program teachers.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Job Training Partnership Act Funding (for educationally disadvantaged youth)
- Local program funds

**Equipment, materials, facility needs**

The hands-on learning resource materials are teacher-made and cost very little. Many of the teachers who have incorporated the changes into their classrooms have had great success in requesting donations of couches, large pillows, lawn furniture and carpet pieces from the community. Because the actual materials and classroom environment changes are easily made and adapted, this approach to working with at-risk students is easily replicable.

**Staffing and staff development**

No additional staffing is required. These techniques and strategies are appropriate at any grade level and across all content areas.

These teachers have invested approximately eleven days of specialized training to acquire the skills necessary to master this innovative intervention for at-risk students. The Center for Success in Learning Institute is a three day seminar/workshop and it is offered approximately once a month in a variety of cities throughout the state of Texas. Information about training dates and locations is available through:

The Center for Success in Learning
4949 Westgrove, #180
Dallas, TX 75248
214/407-9277

**Program Contacts**

Jennifer Edwards, JTPA Coordinator
Rick Burnet, Principal

Frisco ISD
P. O. Box 910
Frisco, TX 75034-0910
214/335-6040

Other schools with successful learning strategies based programs in place:

San Saba ISD
607 W. Storey St.
San Saba, TX 76877-5613
915/372-3771
Bill Grusendorf, Superintendent

Corsicana ISD
601 N. 13th St.
Corsicana, TX 75110-3015
214/874-7441
T. Y. Hays, School Board

Hays CISD
Rt. 2 Box 22
Buda, TX 78610
512/268-2141
Irene Helton, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

Waelder ISD
P. O. Box 247
Waelder, TX 78959-0247
512/665-7161
Susan Perez, Superintendent

## Single Teen Parenting Program
## Hart Independent School District
## Hart, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Grades 8-12
Teen parents
Pregnant teenagers

### Community Description/School Context

The high plains of the Texas Panhandle is the remote location of the rural community of Hart, Texas. Agriculture-related business dominates the area and attracts a large population of migrant workers and their children. Of the 566 students enrolled in the district, 79 percent are Hispanic, 19 percent are White non-Hispanic, and 2 percent are Black. Seventy-nine percent are from low-income families. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has identified Hart ISD as a "targeted low-achieving district" based on low performance on the state achievement tests. Consequently, every possible opportunity to strengthen student performance is being pursued by this district.

### Program Description

The Hart Single Teen Parenting Program has successfully implemented a program funded through a highly competitive state grant for three consecutive years. It is rare that such a tiny district could compete with larger districts for similar funding and be awarded funding status for each application.

Motivated by the magnitude of the needs that pregnant teens and single teen parents were experiencing in Hart, the coordinator and counselor for the program applied for a large grant that was offered through the Vocational Education Division of TEA. In the summer of 1989, the district received $25,000 from TEA to begin the program. Each program year since then, they have been awarded the funding.

The major objective of the Single Teen Parenting Program is to provide pregnant students, single parents, and homemakers who are of public school age an opportunity to participate in vocational education programs which lead to marketable skills and gainful employment. All project efforts are coordinated with existing programs funded through Chapter 2, Chapter 1 Migrant, Chapter 1 Regular, Carl Perkins Vocational, and Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA). This coordination can be attributed to an advisory committee composed of representatives from the faculty, administrative staff, counseling department, the school nurse, a parent, a student, and the vocational equity consultant

from Education Service Center Region XVI. The committee also provides resource networking to assist with health care, child care, life skills, parenting skills, and the developmental assessment of the children involved.

Students participating in the Single Teen Parenting Program receive the following services:

- assistance with basic academic and vocational skills
- encouragement to stay in school through ongoing counseling services
- training in child development and parenting skills
- assistance with vocational assessment
- assistance with financial aid (re: vocational and career training and college)
- occupational training in a variety of vocational areas
- resource networking with JTPA, Texas Department of Human Resources, Texas Employment Commission, Texas Migrant Council, and Region XVI
- paid child care and transportation
- supplies and other necessary materials
- assistance with short and long range goals for graduation and transition into the work force.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

Texas Education Agency: *Single Parents, Displaced Homemakers and Single Pregnant Women or Elimination of Sex Bias and Stereotyping* ($25,000 annually, must re-apply each year)

Job Training Partnership Act (amount varies each funding cycle)

Chapter 1-Migrant Education
Chapter 1-Regular Education
Chapter II
Carl Perkins Vocational Act

**Staffing**

One program coordinator/counselor
One homemaking teacher
Advisory Council (volunteers)

This program is no longer in existence, but is in this directory for your information.

# Life Management Skills (LMS)
# For Migrant Students
# A Program Within a Program
# The Migrant Education Program Coordination Center
# Kingsville, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Migrant children, ages 3-22

## Community Description/School Context

The Life Management Skills Training Workshop is one of the migrant education coordination activities provided by the Central Stream Migrant Education Program Coordination Center, located on the campus of Texas A & I University in Kingsville. A retreat setting is provided for the three-day intensive training. The "community" of trainers-in-training includes counselors for migrant students, teachers, and educational staff members who have direct contact with at-risk students in a 16 state region known as the "Central Stream." The Central Stream Migrant Education Program Coordination Center (MEPCC) is based in Texas, but it serves 16 states including Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

## Program Description

The Migrant Education Program Coordination Center is one of three regional sites funded annually to provide inter/intrastate coordination activities, including training and information dissemination services. The primary focus of the Life Management Skills program is to establish or improve the educational and support services designed to meet the special needs of migrant children. The program identifies, recruits, and serves the needs of migrant children. It follows them from ages 3 to 22 years, or until they cease to become migrant. The goal is to ensure the continuity of the educational and support services that are rendered to this mobile student population. The participants generally receive:

- Supplemental instructional services
- Career and vocational counseling
- English as a second language
- Bilingual services
- Cultural enrichment activities
- Essential support services such as medical, dental, and nutritional counseling

The Life Management Skills curriculum addresses the intrapersonal and interpersonal needs of migrant youth. The workshop is designed to train counselors, professional staff, and school administrators who have direct contact with students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. Objectives for the workshop training are to:

- Provide training in a specialized curriculum for at-risk students with unique needs
- Allow participants the opportunity to experience the curriculum in the same manner as the students would
- Allow participants the opportunity to develop leadership skills to become Life Management Skills Trainers in their local education agencies
- Learn to identify at-risk students using a set of criteria and indicators
- Sensitize participants to a population that is not easily engaged in social, educational, or extracurricular activities in school

The training is offered quarterly throughout the year and provides 20 clock hours of board approved Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved Advanced Academic Training (AAT) credits.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- School districts are funded with Migrant Entitlement resources which flow through each state education agency to the school districts.

- The Central Stream MEPCC is currently in its second three-year funding cycle with federally allocated funds from the U.S. Department of Migrant Education. The funding is competitive and is contracted to the State of Texas and sub-contracted to Texas A & I University.

These federally funded programs are authorized under Section 1203 of Chapter 1 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988.

**Program Contacts**

Central Stream MEPCC
Dr. Tadeo Reyna, Director
Sigifredo Huerta, M.B.A., Coordinator Specialist
Elva Cerda Perez, Ed.D., Coordinator Specialist

Patrick McMann, M.S., Coordinator Specialist
Sylvia Castro, Ed.D., Coordinator Specialist

Campus Box 152
Texas A & I University
Kingsville, TX 78363
800/338-4118

Texas Education Agency
Frank Contreras, Migrant Program Director
1701 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701
512/463-9067

# Parents Plus Program Model: Parents as Teachers
## Texas Education Agency
## Parent Education Pilot Program
## Morton Independent School District

**Target At-risk Population:** Teenage parents
Low socio-economic parents

### Community Description/School Climate

Morton Independent School District is in a rural west Texas town of 2300 inhabitants. A large population of individuals fall into the low socio-economic category. Sixty-nine percent of the students enrolled qualify for free or reduced lunches, 60 percent are Hispanic, 33 percent are White non-Hispanic, and 7 percent are Black. In grades K-5, 40 percent of the elementary school population was identified as at-risk using state criteria. The teenage parents in the pilot program reflect the school population and most were considered to be from high-risk families. Of the 63 teen and adult mothers with children from zero through three years of age, 45 were bilingual and five were monolingual Spanish. The program served eleven school-age mothers in 1989-90 and seven in 1990-91.

### Program Description

Morton ISD's Parents Plus Program is based on the "Parents as Teachers" model, that has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education's National Diffusion Network as an Exemplary Program. Because Morton is a small community, the district modified the Missouri Parents as Teachers (PAT) model by including all parents, rather than restricting it to new parents. A key element of the program is regular parent contact. Staff members report that contacting parents both individually and in small groups has a greater impact than programs that meet with parents in large groups.

The Parents Plus program uses the *Parents as Teachers* curriculum which revolves around voluntary, free, monthly personal visits that are held by the parent educator in the participants' homes or at the center. During this time parent concerns are discussed and activities for parents and children to do together are demonstrated and practiced to insure developmental progress. Since *Parents as Teachers* materials do not address the needs of children past 36 months of age, the Texas-adopted "Building Bridges" materials were

adapted to meet the needs of older children and their parents. Periodically children are screened for language and developmental progress with the Denver Development Screening Test and the Zimmerman Preschool Language Scale.

Beginning in February, 1991, Parents Plus opened daily. From 9:00 until 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday through Friday, parents are invited to bring their children to the center. Tuesday mornings are designated for children 0-12 months; Wednesday, 12-24 months; Thursday, 24-36 months; and Friday, 3+ years old. Monday morning is reserved as Story Day for children of all ages. This time is designed for the teacher to model how parents should read to their children in English or Spanish. Afternoon sessions from 1:00 until 3:00 P.M. are devoted to special group activities with children and their parents. These afternoons include puppet play, water play, music activities, and painting.

Every Wednesday afternoon English as a Second Language classes are held for parents and their children. Either the teacher or an assistant teaches simple vocabulary, phrases, and sentences to the non-English speakers while the other staff member works with the children. At the end of the session, parents are reunited with their children so that the two groups share the daily lesson with each other.

Monthly large group meetings address topics identified by the parents as an interest or need. Previous meetings have dealt with safety, health, and nutrition.

The parent educator meets regularly with teen mothers who are currently enrolled in Morton ISD. The high school group meetings are held twice weekly during the homeroom program. Junior high school students are contacted individually during homeroom once weekly. The parent educator addresses student concerns and appropriate parenting skills.

The center also has offered additional vision and hearing screenings for two and three-year-old children to detect possible problems that should be referred to the local health center of the special education cooperative.

A special source of pride to Parents Plus has been an extensive developmental toy lending library and Resource Center for parents to check out materials that will enrich their children's lives and stimulate them intellectually. Items include cassette tape players, cassettes, books, and toys that help develop fine and gross motor skills. An Apple IIGS computer with software designed for children is also available for checkout.

Since implementing the program, a higher percentage of teen parents have graduated from high school than had during previous years. The school community and community at large have supported the efforts of Parents Plus by donating materials, personnel, and other resources that have enabled the program to continue into the 1991-92 school year.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

The Morton ISD Parents Plus Program was initially funded entirely by a Parent Education Pilot Program Grant that was awarded for two years. The district strongly supports the continuance of this program and has provided redirected funds from other categories in the budget to continue services. An approximation of the percentage of funding from each category is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Migrant Funding | 40% |
| Chapter I Funding | 40% |
| Compensatory Education | 20% |

The Parents Plus Center Coordinator estimates their total yearly costs to be approximately $45,000. The legislature required the Texas Education Agency to offer several grants relating to at-risk youth for model programs for parent involvement and parent education. This was authorized under House Bill 1292. The district had to budget for this money out of local funds and then was reimbursed. (FY 89-90 - $47,909.00; FY 90-91 - $51,692.00)

### Staffing and staff development

Two full-time staff members were employed: a certified teacher and a bilingual assistant. A teacher with early childhood certification and child development training was found to be effective. Parent educators are experienced teachers.

Both teachers are certified by the National PAT Organization. This training is an intensive 4 1/2 day course provided by the Mental Health Association in Texas. A $400.00 registration fee for each parent educator includes a curriculum guide and handouts in English and Spanish. Information concerning training dates and sites can be obtained by contacting:

Parents as Teachers-MHA in Texas
6600 LBJ Freeway, Suite 4115
Dallas, TX 75240
214/934-8506

**Program Contacts**

Charles Skeen, Superintendent
Morton ISD
500 Champion Dr.
Morton, TX 79346-3399

806/266-5505

Judy Williams, Program Coordinator
Sue St.Clair, Administrative Assistant
Parents Plus Center
Morton ISD
500 Champion Dr.
Morton, TX 79346-3399

806/266-5900

## Ranger Alternative School
## Ranger Independent School District
## Ranger, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:**

Potential dropouts
Returning dropouts
Pregnant teens
Teen parents

### Community Description/School Context

Ranger is a small community of approximately 3,000 inhabitants, located east of Abilene and west of Fort Worth. Ranger used to rely heavily on the oil business for economic enrichment, but today the community is experiencing economic problems, with activity limited to a few small businesses, a train car repair facility, and some farming. Many of the students in Ranger ISD live in one parent families or are being reared by grandparents or aunts and uncles.

Ranger ISD has one main campus for grades K-12, with the Alternative School on a separate campus. Of the 639 students in Ranger ISD, 80 percent are White non-Hispanic, 16 percent are Hispanic, and 3 percent are Black. Seventy-five percent are from low-income families.

### Program Description

Approximately nine years ago Ranger ISD was suffering from a very high rate of students failing and dropping out of school. Staff members reported that the students who left school were drinking excessively, "hanging out" on the streets, and getting into trouble with the local police. The school board was determined to find some solutions to this dilemma and after researching and exploring available resources, they created an alternative school. Ranger ISD applied for a Juvenile Justice System grant and was awarded funding for the first five years of the program. Each subsequent year they have received funding from the West Central Texas Council of Governments.

Approximately 35-50 students are served during a school year. Students stay in the program for the entire year. Depending on their needs, they may stay in the program for more than one year. Students return to the main campus as their needs are met. They graduate under the regular diploma program, or if it fills their individual need for progress, they may obtain a GED.

The alternative school program's objectives focus on teaching basic skills in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and law. Social and behavioral skills needed to be successful in everyday life are also emphasized. Goal setting, problem solving skills, decision-making skills, and communication skills are also key elements of the comprehensive approach utilized at the Ranger Alternative School. Because the students typically have experienced failure in many areas of their lives, resulting in negative attitudes and low self-esteem, teachers and other staff members make every effort to provide their students with opportunities to experience a sense of worth and value. Time is spent daily helping students to develop positive thinking habits and attitudes. The entire day is structured around learning activities that foster success.

The most important components of the alternative program are:

- Individual student learning paths
  Pre- and post-testing to reveal strengths and weaknesses
  Academics tailored to specific needs and deficits
  Individual plans of action

- Group and individual counseling provided to all students in communication, problem solving, decision making, and self esteem

- A democratic environment that asks for student input and gives students a voice in decisions made

- Fostering and building trust among all members of the program

The program established a successful track record during the first years of operation by attracting significant numbers of dropouts back to the alternative school and by retaining students who were on the verge of dropping out. Today the dropout rate is not even reported by the state because the percentage is negligible.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The Ranger Alternative School was initially funded by a grant offered through the Juvenile Justice System and supplemented with local funds as necessary.

During the last four years of the program, the West Central Texas Council of Governments has been the primary source of funding; supplemental funding from the district budget also is utilized. Compensatory education funds, special education funds (for special education students), and free lunch program funds are used. The alternative school is housed in a separate facility.

**Staffing and staff development**

Currently staff members include the program coordinator, one teacher, and one teacher aide. The coordinator and teacher all degrees and/or training in counseling, special education, and alternative teaching methods and strategies.

**Program Contact**

JoAnn Hatton, Coordinator
Ranger Alternative School
817/647-1187

Ranger ISD
Rt. 3 Box 12D
Ranger, TX 76470-9802

This program is no longer in existence, however, Ms. Hatton is currently working on another program.

# CAP High School
# The Cooperative Alternative Program
# Coleman ISD and Ballinger ISD
# Valera, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Grades 9-12
Dropouts
Identified at-risk students
Teenage parents

## Community Description/School Context

The CAP High School is located 3 miles down a country road outside the tiny town of Valera, Texas in a renovated school built in 1941. The 115 students are bused to the school from three rural West Texas counties. The school districts forming the cooperative range in size from 94 to 1,081 students, and include Ballinger, Bangs, Coleman, Novice, Panther Creek, Santa Anna, and Winters. The communities are economically depressed and primarily agricultural with a few small businesses, and the schools are among the largest employers in the area.

## Districts' Profiles

| District | ADA | Dropout Rate 89-90 | % Anglo-American | % Hispanic | % African-American | % 11 grade pass all TEAMS | % Low Income |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ballinger | 1,081 | 1.6 | 67 | 31 | 1 | 83.3 | 41 |
| Bangs | 892 | 6.8 | 78 | 11 | 11 | 87.8 | 41 |
| Coleman | 1,016 | 2.5 | 73 | 21 | 6 | 82.4 | 47 |
| Novice | 94 | * | 95 | 5 | 0 | 80 | 54 |
| Panther Crk. Cons. | 250 | .7 | 90 | 10 | 0 | 81.3 | 42 |
| Santa Anna | 353 | 2.0 | 69 | 27 | 4 | 86.4 | 46 |
| Winters | 905 | 2.3 | 62 | 36 | 2 | 83.3 | 45 |

Source: Texas Education Agency. (1990). *Snapshots 1990*. Austin, Texas.

## Program Description

The CAP High School was selected as a successful example of a cooperative program between several school districts and communities. Although it is beginning its fourth year, the increase in students has already required the addition of a new building housing a library, six classrooms, two shop areas, a computer room, a print shop, and a darkroom.

In addition to the students referred by their districts, "word of mouth" about the program has influenced many former dropouts to return to school. The 1989-90 valedictorian is a tribute to the school's success: a teenage parent with two children, she graduated "on time" and received a four-year scholarship from a business college in Corpus Christi. Last year's valedictorian received a scholarship to Phoenix Institute of Technology and has since completed the program. Students are encouraged to think beyond graduation and to apply for scholarships to area technical schools, junior colleges, and universities. Adults from the community also attend school to obtain their GEDs or a high school diploma, and they serve as role models to the students.

Some of the unique aspects of the program include a free, on-site day care center for students and staff members, flexible scheduling to allow students to earn the maximum number of course credits, and a vocational program oriented to the students

The program was begun by four school districts in response to a new state mandate that each school district develop a program for at-risk students. Of the 115 students enrolled in the fall of 1991, approximately 50 percent are White non hispanic, 46 percent are Hispanic, and 4 percent are Black.

Students are identified by their schools and referred to the program through a meeting with their principal, counselor, and parents. If they agree to participate in the program, they sign a one-year contract. At the end of the year, students may choose whether or not they want to continue in the program or return to their home school. Most students opt to continue their education in the CAP High School, often because it is the first time they have experienced success and felt positive about themselves in a school setting. For dropouts who are returning to school, CAP staff members work cooperatively with their home school districts to determine appropriate program alternatives.

Students and staff members are quick to identify the single most important element of the program: everyone in the school truly cares about one another. The counselor is available to discuss students' problems and concerns, and is adept in linking the student to the services available in the community: immunizations, doctor or dentist appointments, public housing, food stamps, or other public assistance benefits. Staff members focus on students' strengths to improve their self-concepts, and actively pursue opportunities to broaden the students' range of experiences.

The teacher-student ratio is about 1:10 and enables the students to receive individualized attention. Computers are used in a laboratory setting as well as in several classrooms, and are viewed as important tools for the students's futures.

An on-site nursery is provided for infants and preschoolers. Seventeen children were enrolled in the program in September, 1991. The free child care enables many of the teenage parents to continue with their classes and the staff members are able to assist them in meeting needs that extend beyond academics.

Distance and isolation factors are barriers to community involvement. Staff members are studying ways to increase parent and community involvement. While many parents attend school functions, the distance to the school from the communities it serves causes a hardship for many families who do not have transportation. Staff members have implemented a parenting program that offers evening classes in the local communities.

As one of 15 school sites in a national study of at-risk youth, the program is being evaluated over a three-year period for a US Department of Education grant. The school has been matched to a local high school that is not a member of the cooperative to compare student outcomes and to study the effectiveness of the program. School staff members estimate that approximately 70 percent of the students complete the program, and that many of these continue into post-secondary schools or enter the Armed Forces.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- State and local (Cooperative member's share — cost per student)
- U.S. Department of Education Dropout Demonstration Program
- Job Training Partnership Act: Council of Governments
- Criminal Justice Department: Council of Governments
- Single Parent/Homemaker: Texas Education Agency
- Educational Consolidation and Improvement Act, Chapter 2 Education Service Center

### Staffing and staff development

One principal, one counselor, 11 classroom teachers, two classroom aides (one runs the library and one runs the on-campus suspension room), one secretary, one data clerk, one day care teacher, one day care aide, and one part-time day care aide. A program for volunteers in the nursery is being developed.

In addition to regularly scheduled staff development days, consultants are made available for special projects, such as curriculum alignment.

**Program Contact**

Mr. Larry Weise, Principal
CAP High School
RR 1, Box 43
Talpa, TX 76882

915/636-4355

# MACWEST-Macintosh Writing Effectively with Supportive Technology
## West High School
## West Independent School District
## West, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Educationally disadvantaged students in grades 9 - 10. All other students in grades 9 - 10 enrolled in English, World History, and U. S. Government classes.

### Community Description/School Context

West is a small Czech and German community about 17 miles north of Waco. Students come from families with a strong work ethic and a strong sense of family values. The school district is comprised of 1,235 students in grades K-12, including high school students from another small district and a parochial school. The ethnic make-up at West is 89.9 percent White non-Hispanic, 5.6 percent Hispanic, 4.2 percent Black, and .3 percent Other. On the high school campus, where MACWEST is located, 402 students are served.

### Program Description

MACWEST is an example of professional collaboration in action. A cooperative effort between West ISD, Baylor University, Region XII Education Service Center, and McLennan County Education Co-Op enabled West to obtain $87,000 of the $600,000 set aside by the Texas Legislature to provide capital funding for eight pilot/demonstration programs in technology.

Historically, West ISD students have performed adequately in all test areas, but writing scores have been significantly lower. From the evaluation of the results of the state criterion-referenced achievement tests for the last several years, it became evident that a renewed effort needed to be made in the skill area of writing, particularly in the ninth grade. Additionally, educationally disadvantaged students in the ninth grade performed considerably lower than the other populations. The educationally disadvantaged group has been identified through test achievement scores on state assessment instruments.

The Macintosh Writing Lab — MACWEST is designed for the improvement of writing skills in West ISD. MACWEST is unique in its university connection between West High School and Baylor University. West students' writing samples are sent via a modem link to university students in a Developmental Writing Class at Baylor University. The university

students are learning to teach writing and are using the written work of the West students to practice their skills in editing, suggesting, reteaching, etc.

While the focus is on the educationally disadvantaged and test results are compiled separately for them, the writing lab is open to all students. During the first year of the program, students in high school English Correlated Language Arts, and Resource English classes used the lab. Currently, students in English classes grades 9 and 11, 10th grade World History, and 12th grade United States Government classes participate in the project.

The MACWEST program is administered by the campus principal and the district curriculum director and coordinated by a certified English teacher who is computer competent. Training for all teachers involved is provided during summers, along with approximately 20 hours of training during the school year.

The West ISD administration and Baylor University intend to expand the MACWEST program into more content areas. Staff members also are planning for one Macintosh in each English class to be hooked up to the writing lab and Baylor University.

The program has experienced success. After one semester in the program in 1990-91, 50 percent of the educationally disadvantaged group passed the writing component of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). In 1991-92, 75 percent of the educationally disadvantaged passed the same component on TAAS. During the same period, the other student populations have also shown an increase in percent of them passing the writing component of TAAS.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

A program implementation guide has been developed by administrative and instructional staff involved in the initial stages of the writing lab. Sections of the guide address initial program planning, development, implementation procedures, start-up and projected maintenance costs, and evaluation criteria and data collected. Specific information including requirements for the hardware, software, and staffing will also be available. West ISD will provide this information to other districts that wish to replicate the demonstration project.

**Source of funding**

Texas Education Agency Technology Demonstration Programs
Amount: $87,000.00

**Program Contacts**

Janet York, Writing Lab Facilitator

West ISD
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West, TX 76691

817/826-4211

## Cross Timbers School Development Council
## Tarleton State University
## Stephenville, Texas

**Conditions Present** Context, shared vision, administrative support, planning, resources, commitment, communication, monitoring

The Cross Timbers School Development Council (CTSDC) is a cooperative organization dedicated to school improvement through training and other support for local district administrators and policymakers. Headquartered at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, the Council serves a region encompassing 200 school districts in north central Texas. Currently, 90 school districts and three Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) are members. Specific activities of the Council are determined by critical issues and needs surrounding the administration of local school districts. On-going programs include:

- School Board Member Training
- Administrator Training
- Grant Central Station
- Alternative Certification

### History

CTSDC evolved from a concept that the executive director formulated as a result of his experiences as a school superintendent and as president of Colorado's state superintendents' association. He found that because most school administrators and board members do not have time to stay current on all of the issues confronting them, they need someone who will take on this task as a special interest.

When the executive director received a faculty appointment at TSU in 1983, he found that Austin, the state capital, was a long distance away and that some local school administrators felt a real sense of isolation. He invited a group of these administrators to begin meeting to discuss issues that concerned them, and a loosely knit organization was formed.

Eventually, the group agreed to form a planning committee, and six people were appointed, roughly representing the different parts of the region as well as the three ESCs. This planning committee became the Executive Board of CTSDC and continues as the governing board of the organization today.

**Program**

CTSDC provides assistance to its member school districts primarily through training and information dissemination. Specific training topics are identified through periodic surveys that address the kinds of leadership training needed, legislative concerns, the functions of the State Board of Education, and the Texas local school board standards.

***School Board Member Training.*** Local school board members are informed about current issues and receive training at an annual spring conference and through other workshops held during the school year. The spring conference is a four hour meeting in which as many as 400 board members attend a dinner to hear a nationally recognized speaker address a topic of critical concern. The program concludes with two simultaneous breakout sessions.

In Texas, local school board members are required to participate in training addressing 12 standards established by the Texas Association of School Boards. These standards address such topics as the organization of school districts and school boards, school law, school finance, curriculum, etc. Executive Director Holcomb, who is certified to teach all 12 standards, provides training for members of CTSDC in workshops held on the TSU campus or at the ESCs. The survey of needs is used to help the Executive Board decide on the standards selected for training during a particular year. During the 1991–1992 school year, CTSDC delivered 1,600 person hours of school board training.

***Leadership Training.*** Leadership training is offered primarily through a one-day fall conference jointly sponsored by CTSDC and the Texas Association of Community Schools. Topics selected for training are based on the survey of needs and on what the Executive Committee determines are critical issues. Currently, the "hot topic" is school finance. At the 1991 fall conference, administrators were trained in site-based management by Carl Candoli, one of the nation's leading experts in the area. Training has also been provided in Total Quality Management (TQM) and effective schools.

***Grant Central Station.*** Grant Central Station (GCS) is a unique program designed to help individuals in the member districts of CTSDC and at TSU acquire external funding. GCS is based on the belief that "most people have a God-given talent for greatness, for creativity, and for developing ideas" but that many good ideas die because "those with the new ideas have no one to talk to...". GCS assists potential grant writers by providing a forum for developing concepts for grant proposals, by reviewing proposals and by helping to locate funding agencies.

GCS itself is the result of a grant proposal. It is supported by the Hatton W. Sumners Foundation and CTSDC. A half-time staff member coordinates the program. GCS opened in September 1991 and as of May 1992 had assisted 17 people in developing proposals and in assembling grant information.

***Other Assistance to Administrators.*** CTSDC also assists its members in areas other than information dissemination and training. For example, the Council is currently providing a consultant to help districts develop early childhood programs. Also, through the Council's Alternative Certification program, school districts are assisted in acquiring qualified teaching and administrative personnel. The Texas Alternative Certification program is for persons with college degrees who would like to become certified teachers or administrators.

**Governance and Administration**

CTSDC is governed by a six-person appointed Executive Board composed of five superintendents and one ESC Director. When a board member leaves, a replacement is appointed by the other board members, who seek to assure that the regional constituency is represented. The cooperative has no by-laws, constitution, or written agreements; the Executive Board makes all decisions regarding CTSDC activities. Two planning meetings are held each year, and ad hoc meetings are usually held in conjunction with the fall and spring conferences. The CTSDC program is administered by Executive Director John Holcomb, who is also a full-time faculty member in the Education Department at TSU.

During the spring, the Board sends out membership notices inviting local districts to join CTSDC for the following year. The membership fee is based on district enrollment. Local districts pay $.05 per pupil, with a minimum fee of $100 and a maximum of $600. Most of the districts in the cooperative pay the minimum. The three ESCs in the CTSDC service area also pay the $100 minimum. No other fees are charged except for meals at the fall and spring conferences.

**Program Staff**

The program staff consists of an executive director and a part-time administrative assistant.

**Program Evaluation**

Although no formal evaluation has been conducted, records indicate that cooperative participation and membership have both increased. There were 94 administrators at the first conference in 1983 and 300 in fall 1992. In the Board training component, 112 board members received training in 1984, and 400 in 1992. The initial membership of 16 schools has increased to 90 schools.

**Program Contact**

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Cross Timbers School Development Council
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Stephenville, TX 76402

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817/968-9525 FAX

## Multi-Grade Year Round Education
## Driscoll School
## Driscoll, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Pre-K – 8th grades

### Community Description/School Context

Driscoll is a community of 600 located approximately 35 miles from Corpus Christi. The majority of citizens work in communities surrounding Driscoll. Driscoll School serves 228 children in pre-K – 8th grades. The majority of the students are Hispanic (90 percent Hispanic, 10 percent White non-Hispanic), and 80 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

The school is a major focal point of the community. There is a positive relationship between the school and community, exemplified by the community's willingness to accept the many changes pursued by the school (such as year-round education).

### Program Description

In 1989, over half of the students scored below grade level in reading on achievement tests. In July of that year, after contributions by the community in the decision-making process, the Driscoll Independent School System school board and administration began restructuring Driscoll School. The impetus for the restructuring was to become a 21st century school. To move toward this goal, Driscoll has implemented several changes.

In 1991 Driscoll began implementing Year-Round Education (YRE) operating on a 30-10 plan. Thirty days (6 weeks) of instruction is followed by a 2 week (10 days) break or intercession. During the 2 week intercessions, students are offered the opportunity to be exposed to life enrichment skills such as, golf, martial arts, creative writing, social graces, dancing, gymnastics, computer technology, and many more. Remediation classes are also offered for children who need extra help. The students attend the intercession classes on a volunteer basis, but the majority of students participate. Most intercession classes are taught by consultants (teachers may teach one intercession). State compensatory funds and summer school monies are used to fund the program. No extra money has been required by the district.

In 1990 work began on integrating curricular topics and issues across subject areas. This work has expanded as the school moved to a year-round schedule in that the curricula for some of the six-week sessions have been restructured around certain themes. For example,

during one six-week session, World War II was the highlighted theme. In addition to the study of the war in history or government classes, science classes studied Hitler's genetic experiments and effects of poor nutrition in concentration camps. In math students studied statistical data from the war and learned graphing, Spanish students wrote diary entries in Spanish (à la Anne Frank), etc. Other six-week thematic curricular collaborations are being developed by teachers.

After moving to a year-round school model, the next step in their restructuring process began in the fall of 1992. Driscoll School implemented multi-age grouping, combining kindergarten - 1st grade, and 2nd- 3rd grades, teaching developmentally appropriate curriculum. They also combined 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, rotating the heterogeneously grouped students from all three grades through a three-year curriculum. Next year, Driscoll will combine 4th - 5th grades, therefore organizing the entire school into multi-age classes.

Parent involvement is an important aspect of the restructuring program. Parents not only volunteer to help in the school, but often go to school to learn alongside their children. Each classroom has a parent corner to make parents feel welcome. Parents are also involved in the evaluation of the program through informal conferences, surveys, and school meetings.

The program is being evaluated in a variety of ways. Parents, teachers, students, and administrators are actively involved in evaluating the program's effectiveness. Test scores, surveys, grade averages, teacher and parent observations are some of the ways the program is being assessed.

Staff development has figured prominently into the school's restructuring efforts. The school staff has been trained in instructional methods — cooperative learning, whole language instruction, interdisciplinary curriculum writing — needed for the success of the program.

Driscoll School was selected to participate in the Partnership School Initiative (PSI) by the Texas Education Agency. This has afforded school personnel to work more flexibly with state mandates as they attempt to improve the school's effectiveness in meeting the needs of at-risk students. The school was also selected to participate in the Governor's "Best of Texas" program. They have presented the program at several state-wide conferences in both Texas and Arkansas, as well as at several Educational Service Centers and school districts.

The program start up monies came from Texas Year-Round Education Funds, spending $10,000 for staff development training.

As a result of these innovative efforts, Driscoll has seen improvement in reading and writing scores on state-mandated tests. Because math scores have shown no improvement, other efforts are being planned for future implementation.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- Local district monies
- Texas Year-Round Education Funds

**Staffing and staff development**

Seventy-five hours of training for staff in cooperative learning, whole language instruction, and interdisciplinary curriculum writing.

**Program Contact**

Linda Villarreal, Principal
Driscoll School
200 West 4th Street
P.O. Box 238
Driscoll, TX 78351

512/387-7349

## Tomball Learning Center
## Tomball Independent School District
## Tomball, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** K-12 grade at-risk students

### Community Description/School Context

Tomball is a city of 5,000 located 30 miles from downtown Houston. The school district is a prosperous community—the southern part is a suburban area employing high-technology workers; the northern part is rural, dominated by horse farms. The school district serves 5,400 students—88 percent White non-Hispanic, 7 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Black, and 1 percent other.

### Program Description

In the 1986-87 school year, 24 of the 4,300 Tomball students were expelled. Though this is a relatively low percentage of students, the community was concerned. In 1987 the Tomball Learning Center opened to address the needs of at-risk students. The Learning Center is housed in five classrooms in the oldest building in the district. It shares the building with the district food services and maintenance crew.

The first program offered was the Discipline Alternative Program. Twenty students at a time are served in the Discipline Alternative Program. Assistant Principals at the regular campuses make the assignments and schedule an admission with the Center director. Seats are filled on a first come, first served basis. Students are assigned to the Tomball Learning Center for 30 class days. The program is highly structured with clearly stated consequences for either appropriate or inappropriate behavior. When student behavior and progress improves, both the students and the parents are informed and recognized. For inappropriate behavior there are two levels of consequences: a student may be suspended from school for up to six days each semester; or a student may be expelled from school. The Learning Center staff provides each student with daily instruction in the four core academic areas: science, math, social studies, and language arts.

During their assignment to the Learning Center, all campus-based penalties are suspended. The student may remove those penalties entirely by meeting the following conditions while assigned to the Center:

1. Have no unexcused absences during assignment.
2. Comply with The Learning Center Conditions of Attendance by not receiving any suspensions from school.

3. Achieve an academic grade of 80 percent or higher in the four core academic subjects during the 30-day assignment.

Also, students may not attend or participate in any Tomball Independent School District sponsored extra curricular activity while attending the Learning Center. Students may not enter the grounds or buildings of any TISD campus other than the Learning Center during their assignment there.

In 1988 the Program to Assist Student Success (PASS) and a GED Preparation Program were added to the Learning Center. PASS is designed to assist regular education students who have been consistently unsuccessful in school. Twenty students per year are served in the PASS program. PASS students are admitted by a committee made up of the At-Risk Coordinators from each campus and the Center Director. Seats go to the students whom the committee, by consensus, decides are the most deserving and likely to benefit from the program. No campus has the right to unilaterally assign a student, a student must want to attend the program. The PASS Program stresses academic excellence and personal responsibility. Students receive both individual and group counseling to help them feel better about themselves, to work with and to trust others, and to understand that they have the power to choose to succeed or to not succeed.

Students may earn the opportunity to accelerate through the curriculum and earn more than one year's credit while at PASS. If the student demonstrates qualities — attend school consistently, participate actively in class, complete class and homework assignments, and show class content mastery through test grades — then all of his/her teachers agree to offer the student the opportunity to earn more than one year's credit during the one year spent at PASS.

The Learning Center also provides a GED Preparation program on an "as needed" basis for older students and former students who are not on track for a traditional high school diploma.

The Learning Center is a technology driven school. Students interact with instructional materials through computer assisted instruction, laser disk, and CD-ROM research materials. The Center uses an eight-station instructional learning center, a six-station Apple system, video disk technology, and ten personal computers.

Over a four year period, 90 percent of the Discipline Alternative Program participants have successfully completed the 30 day program. Ten percent of participants have had to repeat the program. Staff feels that one difference between the successful students and the unsuccessful students has been parental involvement. Parents are required to attend an admission's conference for both the PASS Program and Discipline Alternative Program. They are encouraged to call at least once a week or visit the program. Plans are being made to emphasize personal/social skills in the program.

In April, 1991, the Governor's Committee on Excellence in Education identified Tomball Learning Center as an exemplary student intervention program. A presentation on the program was done at the Arkansas State Alternative Education Conference in April, 1993.

In the future, Tomball Learning Center would like to move from a discipline program to a full-scale alternative school. They would like to modify the Discipline Alternative Program away from an emphasis on academic skills to personal/social skills.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

With the exception of the $20,000 Governor's Award (received in 1991) and $3,000 Chapter 1 monies received in 1992, the Center has been fully funded by district funds. The annual budget is $171,000, including salaries ($47,000 instructional budget). The Center enjoys the active support of the Board of Trustees.

**Staffing and staff development**

- Two full-time teachers
- One full-time instructional aide
- One half-time special education teacher
- Program Director (also teaches two courses)
- District-wide substance abuse counselor, associate clinical psychologist, social worker

**Program Contact**

James Daspit, Director
Tomball Learning Center
310 South Cherry Street
Tomball, TX 77375

713/357-3179

## Winnsboro High School
## Winnsboro, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** High school students grades 9-12

### Community Description/School Context

Winnsboro is a predominately White (students at Winnsboro High School are 91 percent White non hispanic, 4 percent Black, 3 percent Hispanic) rural community located 100 miles east of Dallas. The town of Winnsboro has a population of 3,000, a school district enrollment of 1,336. Dairy and chicken farms surround Winnsboro, and most industry is a support for these businesses. There is some tourism industry from the East Texas Piney Woods and area lakes. The economy is growing as active community leaders attract business to the area. Four hundred students in grades 9-12 attend Winnsboro High School.

The community is close and friendly. Parents and community members are welcome and active in the school.

### Program Description

In a 1989 self-evaluation, Winnsboro teachers believed the school system was failing in the areas of student discipline, instructor-principal trust, classroom goals and principal leadership. A Texas Education Agency monitoring report that year stated that the school needed to address school climate concerns.

First, a Faculty Advisory Committee composed of the heads of each department was formed. The purpose was to give experienced teachers who were familiar with the school an opportunity to provide input on problems and solutions. One of the first problems addressed was student discipline.

An "earned-break" policy, involving 15 minutes of free time between second and third periods every morning, was instigated. This school-wide earned break is a time for students to take a break. They may play volleyball, basketball, ping-pong, foosball, have soft drinks and candy. To earn the break, the entire student body must demonstrate good citizenship as defined by: no litter, no vandalism, and no fights in the school. A sign hangs in the trophy case that says, "No break for __ days." When students have earned a break, the sign reads, "No break for 0 days." However, if an offense is committed the tally begins at 3, each day of no infractions means one day is subtracted from the board until the free time is re-earned. They must have three consecutive days of "good citizenship" to re-earn the break. The break is for everybody or nobody. A "no break" bell schedule adds 2 minutes to each class.

Another program involves a 20-minute tutorial program between 6th and 7th periods. All students are assigned to a tutorial class to be used as a study hall. If a student is failing a course, he/she will attend that class during this tutorial period. Students failing two or more classes will alternate attendance between those classes being failed (usually English and mathematics). Students who are academically in good standing are awarded Student Center tickets that they may use to go to the cafeteria to enjoy a break, similar to the morning "earned break." These tickets are issued each six weeks at a "pride assembly." In addition to academic success, tickets are also awarded for good behavior and attendance, some on a weekly basis — others on a six-week basis. Students may choose when to redeem to tickets and may carry them over from one six-week period to the next. However, those students who are failing two or more classes must attend the tutorial class and are barred from using any tickets until their grades improve. While students who do not need special assistance are at the Student Center, teachers conduct one-on-one tutoring sessions for students remaining. The tutorial time is used for reteaching and retesting. The level of expectations for student work have been raised and "below level" course have been abolished. Students must master the assigned content with a grade of at least 80 percent or they receive a "Not Yet" assessment.

In 1992, Winnsboro High School devised a plan and began implementing a program that involves integrating curriculum, solving student problems, and encouraging professional growth. Teachers formed teams across the curriculum in their grade level, for example the ninth grade English, science, history, math, and vocational education teachers are a team. The school schedule has been adjusted to facilitate team collaboration daily. Winnsboro is set up on an eight period day, each teacher teaches classes during five periods, one period is a conference period, one period is the tutorial/advisory period, and one is for team planning. The teachers on a team work to integrate the curriculum. For example, the school recently studied health by writing essays on health issues, doing health problems in math involving weight, blood pressure, etc., studying health issues in science, etc. The teachers on a team work together to solve discipline problems, write Individual Success Plans (ISP), and meet together with parents. Teachers are also experiencing professional growth by discussing what works and what doesn't work, how to do alternative assessments (such as projects, presentations, products), and help each other implement cooperative learning. Teachers are sharing and learning from each other!

Each week, "Week in Review" forms are sent to five different teachers. Teachers are asked to list accomplishments, problems they've encountered and possible solutions, and successful teaching strategies. Survey responses are shared at weekly staff meetings. In addition, teacher input is encouraged in department meetings, special committees, and the Campus Administrative Team comprised of department heads, principal, and the counselor.

Student input is included in Site-Based Decision Making at Winnsboro. The student body is surveyed periodically, and a student council is elected to represent the student body. Parents are included in a variety of ways. An annual survey is sent to all parents and community members, a monthly "Breakfast with the Principal" is held, a parent visitation program encourages parents to attend a couple of hours of classes with their child, parent support groups such as Ag Booster Club and PTA are encouraged, and the Very Important Parents (VIP) Committee comprised of representatives from each parent support group meets monthly with the principal and counselor.

A Campus Advisory Council, comprised of the Student Council president, one VIP Committee member, one school board member, one Chamber of Commerce board member, the district curriculum director, the principal, the counselor, two Campus Administrative Team members, and one other teacher meet to establish campus level performance goals, objectives, and action plans as well as have advisory capacity on the curriculum, budget, staffing patterns and school organization. In addition, the Campus Advisory Council is responsible for evaluating all programs, including the Site-Based Decision Making Plan.

In addition, student success is stressed at Winnsboro High School. Total Quality Management (TQM) is used requiring 80 percent mastery with Outcome Based Education (OBE) structure using cooperative learning strategies, real-life integrated projects, teachers coordinating in academic teams, and inclusive heterogeneous grouping of students. Teachers in academic teams set up Individual Success Plans (ISP) for every student exhibiting problems.

The program has been funded by local district monies with the exception of $12,000-$15,000 per year from TEA for staff development through the Partnership School Initiative Program. Vending machine sales fund activities for the Student Center. The vending machines bring in approximately $1,000 a month that is used to finance Student Center equipment, student activities, and campus beautification.

At the end of the 1991-92 school year, Winnsboro High School had an 8 percent failure rate. In the fall semester of 1992, the failure rate was 1 percent. An average of 25 percent of the students made the A and B honor rolls in 1991-92. At the end of the fifth 6-weeks grading period of 1993, the rate had climbed to 70 percent. Winnsboro was selected as a Texas Gold Star Partnership Model School by the governor of the state. The principal was selected the region's 1991-92 High School Principal of the Year. A vertical team made a presentation at TEA's High School Restructuring Conference in November, 1992. At least one school per week visits the Winnsboro High School campus. There have been numerous newspaper articles describing the changes at the school in both the Winnsboro and Tyler newspapers.

Long term plans include aiming for a zero percent failure rate, 90+ mastery on TAAS assessment, increase in student scores on the SAT and ACT tests, and students graduating with a representative portfolio and a plan for success.


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## Program Implementation Specifics

### Sources of funding

- Local district monies
- TEA Partnership School Initiative Program
- Vending machines

### Staffing and staff development

No special staffing required.

## Program Contact

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## Regenerating Rural America:
## Youth Exchanging with Seniors (Y.E.S.)
## Texas Tech University
## Lubbock, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Teens and senior citizens

**Community Description/School Context**

The Y.E.S. project was pilot-tested in 20 West Texas Counties comprising District 2, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, approximately 18,000 square miles.

**Program Description**

A needs survey was conducted at senior citizen centers of elderly people living independently. In 1990, through a cooperative effort of the Texas Tech University College of Home Economics, the Texas Agricultural Extension Service (Texas A&M University System), and the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, the pilot project for Regenerating Rural America: Youth Exchanging with Seniors (Y.E.S.) was initiated.

The goal of the Y.E.S. Project is to promote positive intergenerational relationships between youth and seniors. Persons who are 60 years of age or older, live independently, and have needs that can be met by youth service providers are eligible to receive services. Members of 4-H Clubs and Future Homemakers of America were identified to participate in the program. Teens participate in six hours of training on Understanding Aging, Effective Communication, Health & Safety Assessment, Careers, Employability, Entrepreneurship & Assisted-Living Services. Teens may provide such services as routine housekeeping, yard/gardening, personal services, minor home repairs, and minor auto maintenance for seniors in their community. In turn, older individuals in the community share their time and talents with teens. Throughout the project, opportunities are provided for teens to discuss their experiences during group meetings.

The project has been coordinated by home economics teachers, Extension agents, health care professionals and senior citizens. Project facilitators and coordinating committees enlisted a variety of community volunteers from business, health care, and civic/service organizations to teach the youth service providers, to match youth with senior citizens requesting services, and to provide opportunities for seniors to work with teens. Parents have been involved as job coaches, client home visitors, etc.

The youth involved in Y.E.S. benefit by developing self-esteem, enhancing personal and social skills, gaining valuable history about older persons and the community, learning about health and home economics-related careers, and building constructive citizenship skills. Seniors benefit from the project by gaining a sense of well-being, strengthening their self-esteem, and utilizing their life-coping skills and wisdom. The community benefits from Y.E.S. by utilizing resources more cost effectively, restoring pride in their cultural traditions, and developing an informal network for caring.

Pre- and post-tests were administered to evaluate students' knowledge and attitudes toward aging.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was the major source of funding for the pilot project. The Y.E.S Project has received numerous awards including Stars of Texas, Lone Star Salute for Community Service; Point of Light Foundation Award #775 from the Office of National Services (The White House); Community Connections Award from the American Occupational Therapy Association; Pioneer Excellence Award from Generations United; and several awards for their videos.

The Y.E.S. Project has developed an educational package that includes a *Y.E.S. Project Training Guide, a Y.E.S. Youth Service Provider Guide*, a Y.E.S Service Kit, Y.E.S. balloons, a Y.E.S. T-shirt, and a set of three videos.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

**Staffing and staff development**

Teachers and agents attended a 3-day workshop prior to starting the project. Training sessions were held throughout the project at multiple sites.

A client home visitor is essential. Leaders (teachers, senior citizens, parents, job counselors, Extension agents, etc.) are essential.

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# A Successful Beginning
# Learning Styles in the Primary Grades
# Robert E. Lee Elementary School
# Corsicana, Texas

**Target At-Risk Population:** Entire 2nd grade class

**Community Description/School Context**

Corsicana, located in central Texas, is a small community of about 23,000 approximately 55 miles south of Dallas and 55 miles northeast of Waco. The economy around Corsicana is based primarily upon agriculture and petroleum. Some industries in the region also contribute to the community's economy. Approximately 16 percent of the student population live below the poverty line. The overall ethnic make-up of the Corsicana school district is approximately 57 percent White, 31 percent African-American, 10 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Asian.

Robert E. Lee Elementary enrolls just over 425 students. The school building was originally built in 1921, but has been remodeled and modernized inside. It is located in an older, more established neighborhood. Ethnic diversity in the school differs somewhat from the districts percentages in that Lee enrolls about 77 percent White, 16 percent African-American, and 7 percent Hispanic. There is reportedly a good relationship between school and community. Local businesses participate in a "Partners in Education" program, and community volunteers come into the school to participate in a HOSTS reading program.

**Program Description**

The Learning Styles program, "A Successful Beginning," began in 1991. It was initiated by a 2nd grade teacher who taught at Robert E. Lee Elementary. The teacher received permission and support to make learning styles modifications in her class. After 2-3 months of preparation in introducing her second graders to the concept of learning styles, the teacher administered learning styles assessments. During the preparation time, different environmental conditions were made available for students to try. Based upon assessment results, the teacher attempted to organize her classroom and daily routines to accommodate the various preferences indicated.

Some students prefer the traditional classroom organization, sitting individually in desks. Others prefer more informal seating arrangements (on the floor, in other furniture, etc.). Other modifications include varying light, sound, grouping modifications, etc. Students are allowed to bring snacks into the room to "munch on" at appropriate times.

Because some students prefer to work intensely in the morning and others prefer other times of the day, some modifications of the daily schedule are made so students can work on seatwork when they prefer. Options for students to work over longer periods of time or shorter time frames with frequent breaks are also provided.

Parents are informed of the program during open house early in the school year, and conferences are held after the Learning Styles assessments are completed. The results of these assessments are shared with the parents. The teacher also provides suggestions to parents on ways that they can establish an optimum study/learning environment for their child at home.

Preliminary information suggests that parents and students alike feel positively toward learning styles modifications. Students have a positive attitude toward school. These students generally receive better grades, achieve better results on standardized, mandated testing, and are less frequently in trouble due to problem behavior. It appears that, with modest adjustments to curriculum and with accommodating the classroom environment to facilitate students' differing learning styles, great gains may be achieved toward providing a "successful beginning" for younger elementary school students.

This learning styles approach is also being used in academic support services to students. These include special education resource room, Chapter I (Title I), etc.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The initial Learning Styles training requires an 18 hours of staff development with a trained consultant. Estimated cost for this consultant is $2500. However, annual costs to purchase the assessment materials (including machine scoring) are estimated at $150-200 (depending on the number of students to be assessed). Some additional annual training (8 hours) is an additional cost, estimated at $800. The $1000 annual cost is funded from a "campus friends" fund (local contributions to the school).

**Staffing and staff development**

The program is one which is coordinated and run by the classroom teacher with no additional staff. Three volunteers donate an hour/week (perhaps a bit more) to help administer the learning styles profile.

**Program Contact**

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# Literacy Across the Curriculum
# A Learning Styles Approach
# Jacksonville Intermediate School
# Jacksonville, Texas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All 4th-5th grade students

## Community Description/School Context

Jacksonville is a small community of about 13,000, located in eastern Texas, approximately 25 miles south of Tyler and 125 miles southeast of Dallas. Though Jacksonville enjoys a rather stable economy, based primarily upon small industry and farming, there is significant poverty. Thirty-seven percent of the school-age children live in homes where the family income is below the poverty-level, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Indeed, almost 44 percent of the 4,000 students attending the Jacksonville schools participate in the free and reduced lunch program. The annual dropout rate is estimated to be 3.9 percent.

There has also been a significant increase in the Hispanic population in recent months. This has required significant adjustments to the school district's bilingual/ESL (English as a second language) programming. Approximately 5 percent of the student population currently is identified as limited English proficient.

Jacksonville Intermediate School serves about 685 fourth and fifth grade students. The ethnic make-up generally reflects that of the district with approximately 65 percent White, 21 percent African American, and 14 percent Hispanic.

## Program Description

The Jacksonville Intermediate School "Literacy Across the Curriculum" program in an integration of whole language approaches, curriculum integration across content areas, and learning styles methodologies. This integrated approach began in 1991 with the introduction of a new principal to the school.

Language arts objectives and curricula are arranged around thematic units developed from science and social studies contents. Vocabulary development, spelling, writing and reading activities are related to the content in these other academic disciplines. Other "whole language" components are also incorporated.

At present, mathematics objectives are not incorporated into these thematic units. However, math is taught both in the morning and in the afternoon to accommodate students who tend to learn better in the morning than in the afternoon, or visa versa.

Other organizational and environmental modifications have been made to address student learning style differences. These modifications include informal seating options to the traditional desk and chair, variations in light intensity, opportunities to listen to music, etc. while studying, etc.

The Literacy Across the Curriculum program was instituted in an effort to increase the achievement level of the students and to facilitate heterogeneous grouping. By 1999 it is envisioned that the school will be a total learning styles school with the total inclusion of all students.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The Jacksonville ISD has made a substantial commitment to the learning styles approach to teaching and learning. Therefore, the programmatic and staff development funds are built into the local school budget. Chapter I moneys and funds from the Eisenhower Math and Science state allocation also contribute.

**Budget**

Funds have been used primarily for staff development and materials. Consultants are brought into the district to train teachers in learning styles methodologies. The overall annual budget of approximately $23,000 covers consultant expenses (30 hours of training) and materials costs ($5000), which covers assessment materials as well as classroom materials (tactile/kinesthetic kits developed for "hands on" instruction and additional library books).

**Staffing and staff development**

Staff development funds have also been made available both to bring consultants into the district and to send select district staff to New York to the Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles Training Institute. Training has also been received from the Texas Center for Learning Styles program, located at East Texas State University in Commerce, Texas. In addition to training in learning styles, staff development efforts have also focused upon whole language approaches to teaching language arts, as well as strategies for integrating curricula across content areas.

Initial training in using a learning styles approach was facilitated by bringing in a consultant for 16 hours of staff development. This has been followed up with 30 hours of training per year. Teachers meet with the principal and curriculum coordinators at least weekly to improve and adapt the curricula to a learning styles approach.

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## "Take Action And Succeed"
## Learning Styles Summer Program
## Jacksonville High School
## Jacksonville, Texas

**Target At-Risk Population:** Students who have failed the Texas high school exit examination

### Community Description/School Context

Jacksonville is a small community of about 13,000, located in eastern Texas, approximately 25 miles south of Tyler and 125 miles southeast of Dallas. Though Jacksonville enjoys a rather stable economy, based primarily upon small industry and farming, there is significant poverty. Thirty-seven percent of the school-age children live in homes where the family income is below the poverty-level, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Indeed, almost 44 percent of the 4,000 students attending the Jacksonville schools participate in the free and reduced lunch program. There has also been a significant increase in the Hispanic population in recent months, requiring significant adjustments to the school district's bilingual/ESL (English as a second language) programming.

Jacksonville High School enrolls just over 1,000 students. The ethnic make-up generally reflects that of the district with approximately 64 percent White, 23 percent African American, and 12 percent Hispanic. The annual dropout rate is estimated to be 3.9 percent.

### Program Description

The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is a state-mandated testing system. All students in grades 4 and 8 undergo a battery of academic tests to demonstrated their knowledge of basic academic contents. Beginning in the 10th grade, students take a high school exit test, also a part of the TAAS system. All Texas high school students must pass this exit test before they are able to graduate. The test currently includes the content areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Science and social studies contents will be added to the battery for the spring, 1995 administration. For students who do not pass all components of the initial test in the spring of their sophomore year, additional administrations are offered each summer, fall, and spring until they demonstrate mastery in each content area.

In the spring of 1992, Jacksonville High School, along with several other school districts, cooperated with the South Central Region Learning Styles Center (located in the Dallas area) to offer 11th grade students who had failed one or more parts of the TAAS exit test the opportunity to take the spring test with learning style modifications. These

modifications were allowed through the granting of a waiver from the state education agency. Ninety-nine students were administered a learning styles inventory (Dunn, Dunn, and Price) to assess learning style preferences. The inventory assessed preferences in lighting (bright-dim), sound (noisy-quiet), room design (formal-informal), time of day (early-late), learning environment (alone-group), learning input preferences (auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic), etc. Without any TAAS remediation efforts based upon this information, students were given the option to take the test under standard testing constraints (quietly seated in rows of desks) or to modify the test administration to match their learning style preferences. Seventy-two chose to adapt the test to their learning styles. Of the 29 who chose the traditional administration, 14 had compatible styles with the traditional testing environment. Those who had test administration modifications based on their environmental preferences averaged greater improvement in mathematics and writing than those who chose the incompatible standard administration. There were no real differences between the two administrations in the reading section. The testing environment modifications included such things as:

- sitting on the floor, rocking chair, couch, bean bag, etc. rather than in a standard student desk
- listening to music via headphones
- providing snack foods, drinks for students to get up and get
- allowing student to move about as they chose (without cheating)
- providing different colored acetate sheets to read the test through
- modification of test administration time (however, because of state administration requirements to maintain student naiveté relative to specific test content, the time modifications were limited), etc.

Jacksonville ISD decided to continue the research by offering a summer TAAS remediation class taught by teachers trained in learning styles. This *Take Action And Succeed program* was in addition to a traditional TAAS remediation summer program. The course ran for one month and ended just prior to the summer administration to the TAAS exit test. The program teamed elementary and secondary teachers together to provide individualized learning experiences tailored to the learning styles of their students. These modifications included such things as the use of "hands-on" manipulatives, global strategies for writing, and reading frames (strategies for approaching the reading event to "glean" the important content). The team approach was used because it was thought that the secondary teacher could provide the necessary content, while the elementary teacher was more adept at making learning modifications. Those students who chose this innovative remediation program, coupled with a TAAS administration environment suited to their learning environment preferences, achieved greater gains than those who chose the traditional program or those who chose no remediation program at all. Student survey information also suggests greater satisfaction and enjoyment with the learning styles approach to the summer program than with the traditional approach.

Jacksonville High School plans to expand the program to include remediation in the new science and social studies content areas as they become part of the TAAS.

**Program Implementation Specifics**

**Sources of funding**

The Jacksonville ISD has made a substantial commitment to the learning styles approach to teaching and learning. Therefore, the programmatic and staff development funds are built into the local school budget. The summer program, including staff salaries, is specifically funded from the compensatory education moneys received from the state education agency. Staff development funds have also been made available both to bring consultants into the district and to send select district staff to New York to the Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles Training Institute, as well as to the Texas Center for Learning Styles program, located at East Texas State University in Commerce, Texas.

**Staffing and staff development**

The summer school program employs 4-5 teachers, based upon the number of students enrolled. Teachers who started the summer program received 18 hours of training in a learning styles approach to teaching. This involved a consultant cost of $5,000 and additional $800 for materials and equipment. The current training expenses are for 6 hours of training ($1250 for consultant and materials).

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# Integrating Curriculum at the Elementary Level
# Kelley Elementary School
# Colorado City, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** Early childhood through 2nd grade students

## Community Description/School Context

Colorado City, Texas is a rural community with approximately 4,800 residents. It is located about 50 miles west of Abilene in the western part of the state. Colorado City has suffered in the decline in the oil industry. However, the community was successful in convincing the state to locate a prison nearby. As a result, the economic base has been strengthened and younger families are moving to the area. Other economic factors include farming, tourism/recreation, and a large power plant. Yet, even with this rather diverse economic base, nearly 40 percent of the residents fall below the poverty level set by the federal government.

The school district serves almost 1,500 students in their early childhood through 12th grade program. The student body is ethnically diverse with 9 percent Black, 40 percent Hispanic, and 51 percent White. Approximately 70 percent participate in the free/reduced lunch program. Students are served on 4 campuses in Colorado City. In addition to Kelley Elementary School, which houses early childhood through 2nd grade, there is an upper elementary school, a middle school, and a high school.

## Program Description

The faculty at Kelley Elementary School have a long-standing commitment to child-centered instructional approaches. Therefore, preferred learning styles and stages of intellectual development of their students are assessed. Instruction is then tailored to this information. Further, these teachers have a commitment to provide academic content in as highly contextualized a format as possible. Consequently, whole language approaches and cooperative learning strategies are used frequently. Integrating curriculum across content areas through "integrated thematic instruction" (ITI) is also a strong feature of this school.

Thematic units that are developed and implemented at Kelley Elementary School begin with a science or a social studies focus. Reading, writing, other language arts, and mathematics learning objectives are incorporated within these instructional

units. Teachers work with their grade level peers to develop these 4-8 week units. There is also a focus on bringing human and other resources to students (either into the school or through field trips) rather than just integrating curricular content areas.

Two examples are illustrative. Colorado City is a community in west Texas. The teachers developed an integrated thematic unit around life in the west. Students read/learned about cowboys and Indians. They studied animal life and plants found (and used) on the range. They learned about the branding irons that were used by ranchers in the county and why cattle were branded. They had presentations by rodeo riders and an Indian chief. Leather-craft demonstrations were also experienced. They learned about cowboy outfits and horse equipment. The unit culminated in Western Day, which included such activities as a chili cook-off and numerous rodeo-like activities.

A second theme was a year-long theme that took on many different aspects at different grade levels throughout the year. The theme was "howdy neighbors." Different activities centered around various sub-themes during the year, including:

- in our backyard
- in our neighborhood
- in our school
- in our community
- in our county

The activities associated under these sub-themes were myriad, but they all sought to integrate science, reading, writing, spelling, mathematics, social studies, etc. content learnings into these themes. Further, they sought to bring outside human and other resources to their students to broaden relevance, interest, knowledge, and other perspectives. An additional feature of this thematic approach at Kelley Elementary is that the different activities associated with the learning objectives are developed from a "learning styles" perspective. Wherever possible, students are exposed to content through a variety of modalities. They are encouraged to "see, hear, say, touch, and do" through the course of the teaching/learning process.

As integrated thematic units are developed and implemented, the teachers evaluate the effectiveness of the various activities and learning objectives. Some units are repeated, others are modified. Still others are retired in favor of different ones. As one teacher said, "It is a continual, developmental process."

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Staffing and staff development

The faculty at Kelley Elementary School pursued professional development opportunities in a broad array of topics including whole language learning, cooperative learning strategies, learning styles, developmental approaches to learning, and integrated thematic instruction. Teachers are also afforded the opportunity to work together with the other grade level teachers to identify and develop thematic units.

### Sources of funding

Kelley Elementary School was selected by the Texas Education Agency as a "Partnership School Initiative" (PSI) school. As such, they received approximately $7,000 for staff development. Other funds have come from the school budget out of compensatory, Chapter 1 and local staff development funds.

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# Integrating Curriculum at the Middle School
# Driscoll School
# Driscoll, Texas

**Target At-risk Population:** All middle school students

## Community Description/School Context

Driscoll is a community of 650 located in the Rio Grande valley approximately 35 miles west of Corpus Christi. The majority of citizens work in communities surrounding Driscoll. Driscoll School has a Pre-K through 8th grade program serving approximately 265 students. It is a major focal point of the community and enjoys strong parental/ community support and involvement. Ninety percent of the students are Hispanic and 10 percent White. Four out of five students participate in the free/ reduced lunch program.

## Program Description

In 1989, more than half of the students in Driscoll School scored below grade level in reading on achievement tests. Consequently, after contributions by the community in the decision-making process, the Driscoll Independent School System school board and administration began restructuring Driscoll School. The impetus for the restructuring effort was to become a 21st century school. To move toward this goal, Driscoll has implemented several changes.

In 1991 Driscoll began implementing year-round education, operating on a 30-10 plan. Thirty days (6 weeks) of instruction is followed by a 2 week (10 days) break or intercession. During the 2 week intercessions, students are offered the opportunity to be exposed to life enrichment skills such as golf, martial arts, creative writing, social graces, dancing gymnastics, computer technology, etc. Remediation classes are also offered for children who need extra help. The students attend the intercession classes on a volunteer basis, but the majority of students participate. Most intercession classes are taught by consultants (teachers may teach one intercession). The remaining four weeks of the year are used for a summer break and for Christmas vacation.

A second change also reflects structural/organizational adjustments. Beginning in the fall of 1992 some classes were organized into multi-age units. Over a two year

period, all students were organized into multi-age classes. Although this arrangement is being readjusted next year (1995-96) to better serve students, a commitment to multi-age grouping remains strong. Students have been/are being grouped as follows:

| Previous grouping of students | 1995-1996 grouping |
|---|---|
| Pre-kindergarten | Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten |
| Kindergarten and 1st grade | 1st and 2nd grade |
| 2nd and 3rd grade | 3rd and 4th grade |
| 4th and 5th grade | 5th and 6th grade |
| 6th, 7th, and 8th grade | 7th and 8th grade. |

Both of these changes (year-round schooling and multi-age grouping) grew from a commitment to an integrated curriculum approach to the teaching/learning process. In 1990 work began on integrating curricular topics and issues across subject areas. This work expanded as the school moved to a year-round schedule in that the curricula for some of the six-week sessions have been restructured around certain themes. For example, during one six-week session, World War II was the highlighted theme. In addition to the study of the war in history or government classes, science classes studied Hitler's genetic experiments and effects of poor nutrition in concentration camps. In math students studied statistical data from the war and learned graphing; Spanish students wrote diary entries in Spanish (à la Anne Frank), etc. Other six-week thematic curricular collaborations are being developed and expanded by teachers. Some grade levels have identified a larger thematic concept for the year and developed smaller units that fit within that theme. For instance, development of the concept of "change" included thematic units on changes in the rain forest, changes in Texas, etc.

In order to facilitate the development of thematic units, the school schedule has been configured such that teachers have two "off" periods each day. One of these is a common planning period with other teachers of the same grade level. During this period, teachers are able to address issues, concerns, curriculum development, etc. that are of common interest.

## Program Implementation Specifics

### Staffing and staff development

Initially, school staff progressed through seventy-five hours of staff development in the areas of cooperative learning strategies, whole language instruction, and interdisciplinary curriculum writing. Since then, additional staff development has be provided as established by district priorities.

**Sources of funding**

These efforts have been funded out of available district monies as well as state compensatory education and summer school funds. Together, these funds cover the costs of staff development and some of the two-week interim classes.

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# Authentic Learning and Assessment: A High School Approach
## Hutto High School
## Hutto, Texas

**Target At-Risk Population:** All high school students

### Community Description/School Context

Hutto, Texas is located approximately 25 miles north and east of Austin. Some residents farm (largely cotton), but many in the community commute into the greater Austin metropolitan area for work. Approximately 20 percent of the population falls below the poverty level set by the federal government. Though the residents of Hutto number about 650, the school district, which serves many outside the Hutto city limits, has an enrollment of approximately 675 students. These students are served on two campuses. The elementary program serves students through the fifth grade, while the high school campus houses students from grades six through twelve. Ethnically, the district is composed of 4 percent Black, 19 percent Hispanic, and 76 percent White.

### Program Description

During the 1991-92 school year the Texas Education Agency (TEA) introduced the "Partnership Schools Initiative" (PSI). This initiative was designed to help selected schools in their restructuring efforts by providing various kinds of support from the state agency and by encouraging these schools to develop partnership arrangements with other educational institutions, businesses, etc. to accomplish their restructuring goals. Hutto High School applied and was selected for PSI status.

One of the concerns that surfaced during the planning phase (1992-93) of the school's restructuring effort was how to improve learning in more interesting ways. As a result, the school leadership pursued information about authentic learning/ assessment (relating learnings and assessments to more holistic, "real world" outcomes). It was thought that if learning could be related to student interests in more integrated ways, then students would be more motivated and would learn better. Therefore, the school faculty/administration gathered information and visited other schools that had adopted a more "authentic" approach to learning and assessment.

Hutto High School incorporated authentic projects into the curriculum in the 1993-94 school year. At that time the faculty had generated a bank of "real world" problems for students to consider. They could adopt one of those problems, modify the

problem, or negotiate a different problem to address. The projects are interdisciplinary in nature, requiring the involvement of several academic content areas. Although coordinated through the English/language arts program, faculty from other departments are involved in determining the scope of their students' projects. They also are involved in the determination of grades and honors credit for these projects. The projects typically are a semester in duration with students working on one each semester. The projects may be done individually or in groups. "Daily" grades are assigned for student progress by participating teachers at appropriate points in the project's development. "Test" scores are also assigned as part of the authentic assessment process at various times throughout the semester. Final project grades are determined at the end according to a predetermined rubric.

As the authentic learning approach has become established in the high school curriculum and routine, there has been less reliance on a bank of projects from which to select. Now, students are responsible for developing their own projects. They determine whether they will work with others or individually. Further, they negotiate with their teachers (their English teachers serve as the "lead") about what their projects and project outcomes will be. These projects are then added to the growing pool of ideas incorporated into the computerized project bank. There are currently more than 100 projects identified in this bank.

Examples of projects undertaken by students include the following:

- The school's baseball field was not well designed. It frequently held standing water in the outfield whenever it rained, rendering it unusable. One project involved assessing the problem, working with construction professionals to redesign the field, and to actually do the work to resolve the problem.
- One project investigated recycling and developed a school district recycling program. This was developed into a proposal for the school board to consider. The proposal was adopted.
- The district is probably going to need to build a new high school in the not-too-distant future. One project involved working with an architectural firm to design a new high school.
- Community projects such as landscaping efforts and building needed sidewalks have also been undertaken.

Initially, the community was less than enthusiastic about this new approach to school. They saw it as "busy work." However, as they have seen what all is involved in the actual projects, they have become much more interested and supportive. Publicity received as a result of specific projects has also been quite positive. Further, other schools have investigated this approach and have purchased copies to the authentic assessment project's bank of ideas.

**Sources of funding**

As a PSI school, Hutto High School received approximately $7,000 from TEA to be used for staff development purposes. The local school board also provided a discretionary fund of $10,000 for the principal to use in the restructuring effort. These funds were used in the initial phases of planning and getting ready for implementation of the authentic learning/assessment effort. Any ongoing costs have been built into the existing school budget and covered by local district funds.

**Staffing and staff development**

The authentic assessment approach adopted by Hutto High School required no additional or different staff. However, significant time and effort was invested in understanding and embracing this approach prior to implementation. When considering whether authentic assessment was appropriate for their school, the principal and several of the faculty visited Colorado and New York schools that had adopted this approach. They also invested in significant training in how to develop and assess "authentic" projects. This was accomplished by sending six faculty to receive in-depth training. These faculty then became training facilitators for the remaining campus faculty.

**Program Contact**

Mr. Bobby West, Principal
Hutto High School
302 College Street
Hutto, TX 78634

Phone: 512/846-9091
FAX: 512/846-3770

# SECTION 2

# ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH RURAL SMALL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

## Introduction

When considering the replication of one of the promising practices for rural at-risk students presented in this publication, administrators, site-based managers, and other community leaders should understand that they do not need to go at it alone. According to Gordon A. Donaldson, Jr. [Natchtigal, P. (1992). *Rural education: In search for a better way*. Boulder: Westview Press], the more successful rural efforts do not result from small groups of rural citizens working in isolation. These small groups, he contends, tend to use whatever resources they can obtain: financial, management and other expertise, special legislative help, and the assistance of many outside agencies and associations. To this end, this section provides a list of service providers for rural educators and other community leaders.

This section reflecting a myriad of service providers is presented in three parts. The first part includes national and multi-state centers, consortium, councils, and clearinghouses both with a rural focus and also those with an overall purpose. Some of these national organizations have state affiliate offices, and these have been listed in this section. In addition, a list of multi-state providers of technology is found in this first section. The second part contains a list of rural journals and periodicals, some are produced by the same organizations listed elsewhere in this part of the publication. The last part describes state-specific organizations both with a rural purpose and those that are general in scope.

The compilation of this section was accomplished from data gathered through other SEDL rural initiatives with follow-up calls to update information.

# NATIONAL AND MULTI-STATE PROVIDERS

**Center for Rural Education & Small Schools**
Kansas State University
College of Education
124 Bluemont Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
(913) 532-5886

Addressing the unique needs of the area's rural and small schools, the Center performs several functions: (1) coordinates and conducts research and development activities; (2) develops strategies and delivery systems; (3) coordinates and disseminates information on its findings; (4) develops and maintains cooperative relationships with state, regional and national agencies, organizations, and institutions with interests in rural education; (5) provides a forum for discussion of issues, practices, and problems by concerned parties; (6) coordinates the establishment of training programs; (7) serves as an advocate for rural education, representing the interests of rural and small schools at the state, regional, and national levels; and (8) provides leadership, serving as an initiator of workshops and seminars that relate to rural education and the needs of rural educators.

**Center for the Study of Small/Rural Schools**
University of Oklahoma
555 E. Constitution Street, Room 213
Norman, OK 73073-0005
(405) 325-1450

The Center for the Study of Small/Rural Schools is a cooperative effort between the College of Education and the Public and Community Services Division of the College of Continuing Education, both of the University of Oklahoma. The Center provides assistance and technical support through conducting workshops, training programs, surveys, needs assessments, etc. to rural schools. It also conducts and gathers research in the areas of school improvement and reform, restructuring, staff development, administration, and teaching, thereby generating, analyzing, synthesizing and/or evaluating knowledge that can improve the quality of rural education in the United States.

**Communicating for Agriculture**
P. O. Box 677
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218) 739-3241

This association is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to the strengthening of rural America. The organization's goals and activities are set by its

40,000 members. It provides scholarships for college-bound students who will be returning to their rural communities and/or will work with agri business.

**Consortium of Higher Education and Regional Rural Program Administrators**
c/o National Rural Education Association
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7022

Formerly known as the Consortium of Higher Education Rural Program Administrators, the consortium conducts rural education projects, outreach programs, rural education research, staff development and inservice, and other special events and activities that contribute toward school improvement in rural communities. Membership includes directors of university-based rural education centers and from Regional Educational Laboratory rural education programs. The Consortium meets once in the fall, in conjunction with National Rural Education Association annual conference, and once at mid-year.

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools**
P. O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325
(800) 624-9120 (outside WV)
(800) 344-6646 (in WV)

Established in 1966, the Educational Resources Information Center's Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS) acquires, processes, and abstracts documents and articles for the ERIC database in the areas of American Indian and Alaska native education, Mexican American education, migrant education, outdoor education, rural education, and small schools. ERIC/CRESS staff conduct training about the use of the ERIC system, respond to requests for information, conduct free searches, and produce free and for sale publications. Advised by a National Advisory Board, the Clearinghouse maintains a network of ERIC/CRESS Partners.

**Mayo Center for Rural/Small Schools**
College of Education
East Texas State University
Commerce, TX 75429
(903)886-5197

The Mayo Center for Rural/Small Schools is envisioned as a service activity of the College of Education of East Texas State University. It is not an organization in the sense that there will not be member schools, dues, etc. It is not intended to be a political lobby group per se. East Texas State University will provide an office and staff time.

Schools using the service of the Mayo Center for Rural/Small Schools will be asked to support the activities in which they are involved through a fee structure.

**National Rural Development Institute**
Western Washington University
Miller Hall 359
Bellingham, WA 98225
(206) 676-3576

An umbrella organization, the Institute coordinates the work of the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES), the National Consortium of Universities Preparing Rural Educators, and the National Rural and Small Schools Consortium (NRSSC). Its goals are to improve services to students, teachers, and teacher educators in rural areas as well as to develop rural education research. It disseminates information via journals and newsletters as well as maintaining a library and coordinating a speaker's bureau.

**National Rural Education Association (NREA)**
Colorado State University
230 Education Bldg.
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7022

NREA, the oldest and perhaps the largest advocate for rural education in America, endeavors to further the improvement of educational opportunities for all children in rural areas. The NREA conducts an annual National Conference; publishes *The Rural Educator*, the *NREA News*, and *The Country Teacher* journal and co-publishes documents with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and other agencies. Membership is open to anyone or any organization interested in its goals.

**People United for Rural Education (PURE)**
RR3, Box 41
Alden, IA 50006
(515) 855-4206

Acting as a clearinghouse for educational materials, this grassroots organization lobbies for bills supporting continuing quality education in rural areas in its attempt to protect, maintain, and improve educational opportunities in rural schools.

**Rural and Small District Forum (RSDF)**
National School Boards Association
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(708) 838-6722

A component of the National School Boards Association, RSDF provides programs, services, and benefits for school leaders from districts in rural areas and small towns and intermediate or county units that serve primarily rural populations. It is advised by an appointed steering committee of rural school board members from all over the country. Comprised of member schools, not individuals, the RSDF has its own annual meeting, special sessions during the NSBA Annual Convention, and board development workshops designed especially for rural board members.

**Rural Sociological Society**
Department of Sociology-Wilson Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-5251

The Rural Sociological Society (RSS) promotes the study of rural life through research, extension, and education for the purpose of confronting problems, answering questions, increasing opportunities, and thereby improving the quality of life in rural areas. It publishes two quarterlies: *Rural Sociology* and *The Rural Sociologist*. It also provide a forum for new research developments, public policy questions affecting rural life, and application of knowledge in resolving societal problems through its annual meetings.

**Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development**
Kansas State University
College Court Bldg.
Manhattan, KS 66502
(913) 532-5560

A national effort, the Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development is governed by a National Steering Committee. The Clearinghouse serves educational providers including colleges and universities, community and economic development corporations. In its efforts to improve rural access to continued education, it disseminates information on effective models for serving rural areas; facilitates the development of effective educational models in response to selected rural problems; provides forums for the exchange of information among professionals from the complete range of educational providers serving rural areas; develops regionally organized and supported networks; and advocates rural needs with educational associations, state and federal policymakers, and other relevant publics.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**Special Interest Group (SIG) on Rural Education of the American Educational Research Association**
Appalachia Educational Laboratory
P. O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325
(304) 347-0400

One of 97 SIGs sponsored by the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the group encourages educational research relative to rural schools and people in rural America and provides a forum for the dissemination of the findings of such research in conjunction with AERA. Comprising of members and non-members of AERA, this group disseminates a newsletter three times a year.

## MULTI-STATE PROVIDERS OF TECHNOLOGY RELATED SERVICES

These networks are generally collaborative efforts between state departments of education, universities, intermediate educational units, and public broadcasting facilities. The technology of distance transmissions via satellite, cable, microwave, and fiber optics provide educational instruction in foreign language, the sciences, and other subjects to small numbers of students that otherwise would have not been possible, justifiable, and/or affordable. Staff development activities are also offered through these networks.

**Arts and Sciences Teleconferencing Service (ASTS)**
Oklahoma State University
401 LSE
Stillwater, OK 74074
(405) 744-7895

**TI-IN**
TI-IN United Star Network
1000 Central Parkway North, Suite 190-B
San Antonio, TX 78232
512-492-3900

The TI-IN Network distance learning technology provides live, interactive instruction for students, teachers, and administrators. TI-IN is in partnership with the United Star Network, the multi-state, educational partnership.

**SERC**
Arkansas Department of Education
4 State Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201-1071
501-682-4474

Louisiana Public Broadcasting
7860 Anselmo Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70810-1199
504-767-5660

Instructional Television Department
KLRU - TV 18
P. O. Box 7158
Austin, TX 78713
512-471-4811

The Satellite Educational Resources Consortium (SERC) is a partnership of education and public broadcasting aided by private industry, universities, and local, state and federal government. State and local education agencies are SERC's link top schools, determining and designing courses ads well as pinpointing the schools that will benefit the most from SERC offerings. Educational television provides the technical and production capability to deliver courses through satellite, microwave and cable technology.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

While these organizations do not necessarily have a rural focus, membership and/or client services are available to all educators.

**American Association of School Administrators**
Small Schools District Program & Committee
1801 N. Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 528-0700

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) provides an Advisory Committee on Small School Issues for all members. Meeting three times a year, the Committee also serves as a national voice on issues impacting small school districts.

**Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)**
1250 North Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314 - 1403
(703) 549-9110

ASCD endeavors to strengthen school leadership at all grade levels, primarily for curriculum, instruction, and supervision purposes. It provides staff development opportunities as well as publishes and disseminates a wide range of materials in line with its goals. Some state affiliates have been involved in the training of trainers in Tactics for Thinking, an ASCD program designed to promote higher order thinking skills. Consultant as well as materials fee are charged for this service available to schools and educational service centers. The state affiliates are as follows:

Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Sheridan Public Schools
400 N. Rock Street
Sheridan, AR 72150
(501) 942-3135

Louisiana Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
5913 Milne Boulevard
New Orleans, LA 70125
(504) 483-6428

New Mexico Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
c/o Texas Tech University
3803 94th Place
Lubbock, TX 79423
(806) 798-3320

Oklahoma Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
c/o Office of the Superintendent
Oklahoma State Department of Education
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4599
405-521-2711

Texas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1101 Trinity
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 472-3403

**Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information**
P. O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
(703) 821-2086

As the information component for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect within the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Clearinghouse serves as a major resource center for the acquisition and dissemination of child abuse and neglect materials. From its database and other resources, the Clearinghouse develops publications and services to meet the needs of its users.

**Institute for Responsive Education (IRE)**
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(615) 353-3309

A non-profit public interest organization, IRE promotes parent and citizen involvement in education with a special emphasis on equity issues. Through research, policy development, technical assistance, and advocacy projects, IRE works to encourage citizen participation as an essential ingredient in school improvement and has produced more that 75 reports, handbooks, and other publications since it was founded in 1973.

**Joint Council on Economic Education**
432 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016
212-685-5499

The Council assists educators in integrating economics systematically into the total school curriculum by developing curricular materials and providing teacher training across grade levels. It designs and supports various economic education initiatives through material and training development, publication of information, and

presentation of workshops and conferences. Efforts to increase economic literacy of the young people in the state also include public information papers, educator and school recognition awards and programs, as well as other activities. State councils are as follows:

Arkansas State Council on Economic Education
#4 State Capitol Mall, Room 203B
Little, Rock, AR 72201
501-682-4230

Louisiana Council on Economic Education
Louisiana State University
217 Energy Center
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
504-388-8611

New Mexico Council on Economic Education
University of New Mexico, Department of Curriculum & Instruction
Mesa Vista Hall
Albuquerque, NM 87131
505-272-4114

Oklahoma Council on Economic Education
Oklahoma State University
112 College of Business Administration
Stillwater, OK 74078
405-624-5204

Texas Council on Economic Education
University of Houston - Clear Lake
2700 Bay Area Boulevard
Houston, TX 77058
713-488-9537

**National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education**
U.S. Department of Education
1118 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 467-0867
(800) 321-NCBE

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is a national information center on the education of limited-English-proficient students. NCBE provides reference and referral services on all aspects of bilingual and English as a second language instruction. Its information

system and publications focus on the needs of practitioners, as well as individuals or organizations that work directly with practitioners, in the education of limited-English-proficient persons.

**National Committee for Citizens in Education**
10840 Little Patuxent Pkwy., Suite 301
Columbia, MD 21044
(301) 997-9300

The National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) is a private, nonprofit, national organization, that seeks to increase parental involvement in the public schools. In addition to a number of publications prepared for parents, NCCE provides free counseling and information on a toll-free Parent Education Help Line (800/638-9675).

**National Dropout Prevention Network**
205 Martin Street
Clemson, SC 29634-5111
(803) 656-2599

The Network is affiliated with the National Dropout Prevention Center, a research-oriented institution. Both are committed to reduce school dropout rate ensuring that children graduate from high school with the necessary skills to continue their education or for work purposes. It provides the most up-to-date information on school dropout prevention strategies.

**National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps**
P. O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013
(703) 893-6061
(800) 999-5599

The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps (NICHCY) provides free information to assist parents, educators, caregivers, advocates, and others in helping children and youth with disabilities become participating members of the community. NICHCY offers information packets, publications on current issues, and technical assistance to both parent and professional groups.

**ODPHP National Health Information Center**
P. O. Box 1133
Washington, DC 20013-1133
(800) 336-4797
(301) 565-4167 (in Maryland)

The ODPHP National Health Information Center is a health information referral organization. Established in 1979 by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), the Center's main objectives are to: (1) identify health information resources; (2) channel requests for information to these resources; and (3) develop publications on health-related topics of interest to health professional, the health media, and the general public.

RURAL JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS

**Appalachian Journal**
Appalachian State University
University Hall
Boone, NC 28608
(704) 262-2000

**Comparative Education Review**
The University of Chicago Press
5720 S. Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637
(312) 702-7600

**Country Teacher**
National Rural Education Association
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7022

**Human Services in the Rural Environment**
Eastern Washington University
Inland Empire School of Social Work and Human Services
Mail Stop 19
Cheny, WA 99004
(509) 359-6474

**Journal of Rural and Small Schools**
National Rural & Small Schools Consortium
c/o National Rural Development Institute
Miller Hall 359
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225
(206) 676-3576

**Journal of Rural Community Psychology**
California School of Professional Psychology
1350 M. Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(209) 486-8420

**Journal of Rural Studies**
Pergamon Press, Inc.
660 While Plains Road
Tarrytown, NY 10591-5153
(914) 524-9200

**Research in Rural Education**
College of Education
University of Maine
Orono, ME 04469
(207) 581-2493

**Rural Educator**
Department of Education
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7512

**Rural Sociology**
The Rural Sociological Society
Department of Sociology
Wilson Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-5248

**Rural Special Education Quarterly**
National Rural Development Institute
Western Washington University
Miller Hall 359
Bellingham, WA 98225
(207) 676-3576

**The Rural Sociologist**
The Rural Sociological Society
Department of Sociology
Wilson Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-5248

STATE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

## ARKANSAS

**Arkansas Educational Television Network**
Educational Services Department
350 South Donaghey
Conway, AR 72032
(501) 682-2386

This network provides statewide broadcasting of educational programs and distribution of copies of instructional materials upon request. It collaborates with 15 media cooperatives in the state in order to enhance its capability.

**Arkansas National Diffusion Network (NDN) Facilitator**
Arkansas Department of Education
Arch Ford Building
State Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
(501) 682-4568

Part of the NDN system, the State Facilitator makes grants available to education service centers to assist schools with the training and implementation of NDN exemplary school programs. The Facilitator also promotes awareness of programs for replication through dissemination activities.

**Arkansas Power & Light**
Education/Youth Services
P.O. Box 551
Little Rock, AR 72203
(501) 372-3555

The purpose of Education/Youth Services of this utility is to provide information and support. The division provides career opportunity presentations; scholarships to students, grants for teachers, and informative and safety presentations regarding electricity.

**Arkansas Project LEAD**
Arkansas State Department of Education
4 Capitol Mall, R404A
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
(501) 682-4556

Project LEAD assists administrative organizations in setting up conferences, training workshops, and presentations as well as gathering and providing research on effective leadership skills. Programs are focused for those interested in administrative leadership roles as well as on those new or experienced administrators.

**Arkansas School Study Council**
P. O. Box 428
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72702
(501) 575-5112

With a major focus on rural, small schools, the Council disseminates publications for educators and schools. Newsletters are sent to members as part of their membership fees. Once a year select members attend the American Finance Association Conference.

**Center for Academic Excellence**
University of Central Arkansas
Box 5006
201 Donaghey
Conway, Arkansas 72035-0001
(501) 450-3400

Designating its mission as improving education in Arkansas by cooperating and sharing resources with public school districts, the Center offers services at no cost. Services range from helping putting in place a computer program for high school registration and class assignments to providing technical assistance to study drop-out and at risk student concerns. Requests for assistance may be made by writing or calling the Center.

**Center for Information Services**
University of Arkansas
2801 S. University
Little Rock, AR 72204
(501) 371-1973

Serving as a state data center, this Center provides planning and research information to small town mayors, state and local agencies, businesses, institutions of higher education, and individuals. The information, easily available and free for the most part, is compiled from the decennial census of population and housing, the five-year census of agriculture, business, manufacturers, and other federal and state sources.

**Community Development**
Cooperative Extension Service
University of Arkansas
P.O. Box 391
Little Rock, AR 72203
(501) 671-2000

and

**1890 Agricultural Programs**
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff
P. O. Box 4005
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
(501) 541-6867 or 6868

These two offices are part of the Cooperative Extension System (CES), a partnership between the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the state Land Grant Universities, and county governments. Extension agents help local communities assess economic development options, build community development plans, initiate specific projects, and develop organizing and leadership skills.

**Rural Education Association**
P.O. Box 369
Turrell, AR 72384
(501) 343-2533

The purpose of the Association is to provide support and representation of rural schools. It lobbies legislature for rural issues. It also produces monthly newsletters. The headquarters of the Association changes with incoming president.

**Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation**
308 East Eighth Street
Little Rock, AR 72202
(501) 376-6854

The Foundation's emphasis is on economic development and education. Committed to statewide distribution of grants, it holds workshops to assist educators seeking grants. It will fund innovative demonstration projects which improve people's living standards. Types of support include special projects, seed money, conferences and seminars, matching funds, technical assistance, consulting services, program-related investments, and publications.

## LOUISIANA

**Cooperative Extension Service**
P. O Box 25100
Baton Rouge, 70894 - 5100
(504) 388-4141

and

**1890 Extension Program**
P.O. Box 10010
Baton Rouge, LA 70813
(504) 771-2242

These are the state offices of the Cooperative Extension System, a partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture, the state Land Grant Universities, and county governments. Agents assist local communities to assess economic development needs, to plan for community development, to initiate specific development projects, and to provide training in organizing and leadership skills.

**Louisiana National Diffusion Network Facilitator**
Louisiana State Department of Education
ESEA Title IV Bureau Office
P. O. Box 44064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-3424

Part of the NDN sytem, the State Facilitator makes grants available to education service centers to assist schools with the training and implementation of NDN exemplary school programs. The Facilitator also promotes awareness of programs for replication through dissemination activities.

**Louisiana Project LEAD**
EDAS College of Education
Louisiana State University
101 Peabody Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
(504) 388-6001

Project LEAD assists administrative organizations in setting up conferences, training workshops, and presentations as well as gathering and providing research on effective leadership skills. Programs are focused for those interested in administrative leadership roles as well as on those new or experienced administrators.

**Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts**
715 College Avenue
Natchitoches, LA 71457
(318) 357-3176

Funded jointly by Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science and the Arts and the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the project provides advanced academic courses in trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus, comparative government, French II, and survey of the arts to students in schools throughout the state. It targets rural systems, especially those having no specific programs for gifted/talented students at the secondary level. Participating schools with very small groups of students are networked on-line simultaneously, and provided with the opportunities for interaction and individual assistance.

**Office of Planning & Budget**
Department of Administration
P.O. Box 94095
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-7410

This office compiles data from the decennial census of population and housing, the five year censuses of agriculture, business and manufacturers, and from other sources. It makes available census and economic data as well as educational data to both urban and rural communities/schools.

**Northeast Louisiana Drop-out Prevention Strategy Program**
Northeast Louisiana University
255 Strauss Hall
Monroe, LA 71209
(318) 342-1235

Initiated in 1986, the Program provides four drop-out prevention inservices for teachers annually. Working with 13 junior high schools, 9 of which are rural, Program staff are currently interviewing dropouts to find predictors. Two instruments have been developed to predict dropouts.

## NEW MEXICO

**Agriculture and Resource Development**
Cooperative Extension Service
New Mexico State University
Box 30001, Department 3AE
Las Cruces, NM 88003
(505) 646-1541

These are the state offices of the Cooperative Extension System, a partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture, the state Land Grant Universities, and county governments. Agents assist local communities to assess economic development needs, to plan for community development, to initiate specific development projects, and to provide training in organizing and leadership skills.

**Bureau of Business and Economic Research**
Data Bank
1920 Lomas NE
Albuquerque, NM 87131-6021
(505) 277-6626
FAX (505) 277-7066

This office compiles data from the decennial census of population and housing, the five year censuses of agriculture, business and manufacturers, and from other sources. It makes available census and economic data as well as educational data to both urban and rural communities/schools.

**Los Alamos National Laboratory**
Educational Outreach Office
P. O. Box 1663 HRD-5, MSP278
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545
(505) 667-1919

The Educational Outreach Office serves Northern New Mexico. Its focus is serving pre-college students and teachers of mathematics and science. Some of the programs offered by the Office include TOPS - Teacher Opportunities to Promote Science, SEED - Summer Experience for Economically Disadvantaged, and MSSSC - Middle School Summer Science Camp for rural students primarily.

**New Mexico Highlands University**
School of Professional Studies
P. O. Box 12
Las Vegas, New Mexico 87701
(505) 454-3578

In addition to providing training and coursework for teachers, school administrators, and others, the School has established a network of administrators from rural areas.

**New Mexico Museum of Natural History**
New Mexico Rural Science Education Project
1801 Mountain Road, NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87104
(505) 841-8837

Placing emphasis on educating the "large Hispanic, Native American, and rural populations," the New Mexico Rural Science Education Project provides "hands on learning" about New Mexico's natural history for teachers in project schools. In the past 6 years, 816 teachers representing 36 school districts have been trained and served by project staff. The Museum also sponsors research and collection programs in botany, geology, paleontology, and zoology.

**New Mexico National Diffusion Network Facilitator**
University of New Mexico
College of Education
Onate Hall, Room 223
Albuquerque, NM 87131
(505) 277-5204

Part of the NDN sytem, the State Facilitator makes grants available to education service centers to assist schools with the training and implementation of NDN exemplary school programs. The Facilitator also promotes awareness of programs for replication through dissemination activities.

**New Mexico Project LEAD**
Department of Educational Administration
College of Education, Main Campus
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131
(505) 277-3943

Project LEAD assists administrative organizations in setting up conferences, training workshops, and presentations as well as gathering and providing research on effective leadership skills. Programs are focused for those interested in administrative leadership roles as well as on those new or experienced administrators.

## OKLAHOMA

**Agriculture and Rural Development**
Cooperative Extension Service
Oklahoma State University
139 Agricultural Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078-0500
(405) 744-5398

and

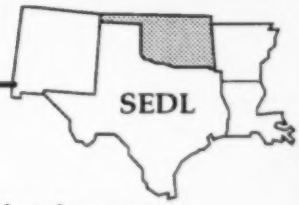
**1890 Extension Program**
Cooperative Extension Service
P. O. Box 730 (or 970)
Langston University
Langston, OK 73050
(405) 466-3836
FAX (405) 466-3138

These are the state offices of the Cooperative Extension System, a partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture, the state Land Grant Universities, and county governments. Extension System agents assist local communities to assess economic development needs, to plan for community development, to initiate specific development projects, and to provide training in organizing and leadership skills.

**Department of Commerce**
P. O. Box 26980
Oklahoma City, OK 73126-0980
(405) 843-9770

This office compiles data from the decennial census of population and housing, the five year censuses of agriculture, business and manufacturers, and from other sources. It makes available census and economic data as well as educational data to both urban and rural communities/schools.

**Northwestern Oklahoma State University**
College of Education/Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative
Alva, Oklahoma 73717-2749
(405) 327-1700




The Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative assists schools in staff development, working with teachers and helping to identify areas of concern in curriculum matters. Based on needs assessments conducted for co-op members, the inservice cooperative establishes services which it feels particular cooperative members require.

**Oklahoma National Diffusion Network Facilitator**
101 W. Broadway
Cushing, Oklahoma 74024
(918) 225-4711

Part of the NDN, the State Facilitator makes grants available to education service centers to assist schools with the training and implementation of NDN exemplary school programs. The Facilitator also promotes awareness of programs for replication through dissemination activities.

**Oklahoma Project LEAD**
Professional Development Center
131 S. Flood Avenue
Norman, Oklahoma 73069
(614) 891-1229

Project LEAD assists administrative organizations in setting up conferences, training workshops, and presentations as well as gathering and providing research on effective leadership skills. Programs are focused for those interested in administrative leadership roles as well as on those new or experienced administrators.

**Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (OTAC)**
123 E. Broadway
Cushing, OK 74023
(918) 225-1882

The Center has two major functions: to maintain a clearinghouse of information on at-risk students for schools in the state and to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of at-risk prevention programs funded by the state. Five of the eleven at-risk projects currently being evaluated by OTAC are located in rural districts or cooperatives. The Center disseminates research and resources through a newsletter, *Educational Excellence Newsletter*.

**University of Tulsa**
College of Education
600 South College
Tulsa, OK 74104
(918) 631-2236

The University has several programs targeted toward rural and/or small schools. These programs include the teacher and administrator intern and certification programs. The administrator intern program places a faculty member in a supervisory role, conducting on-site observations as well as assisting both teacher or administrator interns in small schools. There is also a program designed especially for recruiting young people from rural, small schools all over the state into the education field. An incentive of 50% reduction in tuition is provided to aid recruitment.

## TEXAS

**Department of Education**
Texas A & I University
Campus Box 196
Kingsville, TX 78363
(512) 595-3203

The Department of Education provides two programs involving rural education. The first is the National Science Foundation Institute for Elementary Teachers in rural elementary schools in South Texas. The second program, "The Bilingual Connection: Research on Writing and Reading Across the Science Curriculum," is a state-funded research and development activity to identify appropriate and effective ways to teach limited-English-proficient elementary students in small, rural schools.

**Texas Agricultural Extension Service**
System Administration Building
Room 106A
College Station, TX 77843-7101
(409) 845-7808

and

**1890 Extension Program**
Prairie View A & M University
P. O. Box 3059
Prairie View, TX 77446 -3059
(409) 857-2023

These are the state offices of the Cooperative Extension System, a partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture, the state Land Grant Universities, and county governments. Extension System agents assist local communities to assess economic development needs, to plan for community development, to initiate specific development projects, and to provide training in organizing and leadership skills.

**Texas Association of Community Schools (TACS)**
9600 Great Hills Trail, Suite 320 West
Austin, TX 78759
(512) 345-8292

Working for the improvement of instruction in the state's community schools, TACS disseminates publications and provides professional and legal assistance. It develops corporate partnerships to enhance and strengthen relationships among its member schools, their communities, and the private sector. In collaboration with the Texas Education Agency and Continuing Education programs of The University of Texas at Austin, TACS offers an annual summer workshop for educators as well as an annual conference/business meeting in the fall.

**Texas Department of Commerce**
Texas Marketplace
P. O. Box 12728
Austin, TX 78701
(512) 320-9609
Data line 1-800-446-8676

This office compiles data from the decennial census of population and housing, the five year censuses of agriculture, business and manufacturers, and from other sources. It makes available census and economic data as well as educational data to both urban and rural communities/schools and offers an electronic bulletin board service.

**Texas National Diffusion Network Facilitator**
Education Service Center, Region VI
3332 Montgomery Road
Huntsville, TX 77340-6499
(409) 295-9161

Part of the NDN, the State Facilitator makes grants available to education service centers to assist schools with the training and implementation of NDN exemplary school programs. The Facilitator also promotes awareness of programs for replication through dissemination activities.

**Texas Project LEAD**
406 East Eleventh Street
Austin, TX 78701-2617
(512) 477-9014

Project LEAD assists administrative organizations in setting up conferences, training workshops, and presentations as well as gathering and providing research on effective leadership skills. Programs are focused for those interested in administrative leadership roles as well as on those new or experienced administrators.

**Texas Rural Communities (TRC)**
14 Highland Mall Blvd., Ste. 103
Austin, Texas 78752
512-458-1016

Organized in 1934 under federal statutes addressing economic problems caused by the Depression, TRC continues to assist in the development of rural homesteads as well as to help rural Texans in overcoming economic problems. These services include: loans for rural development, youth services, higher education and acquisition of farm and ranch real estate; grants to Texas Future Farmers Association for community projects; and undergraduate internships for college students.

## SECTION 3

# STATE DEFINITIONS IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION: AT-RISK STUDENTS AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS

## Introduction

Each of the five states within SEDL's Southwestern region has operational definitions regarding school dropouts and at-risk students. The creation of these definitions has been due to the work of several task forces as well as state legislatures and departments of education. These definitions are used for many reasons including: for the development of alternative programs; for allocating funds for schools; for data-gathering; and for other state initiatives addressing the needs of a challenging group of students.

Because the concern for the school dropout has long existed in the nation's schools, the term "dropout" as well as programmatic initiatives and data has a longer history than the "at-risk" one. For that reason, it is no surprise to find that the states' definitions for school dropouts resemble the most often cited national definition, that is, a dropout is a student who leaves school for any reason except death, or transfer to another school without graduating or completing a program of studies. At-risk definitions, for the most part, include a list of characteristics such as those associated with student background, student personal characteristics, school factors, and attitude/performance indicators as evidenced in the following pages.

For purpose of this section, each state department of education was asked for the official statement regarding school dropouts and at-risk students as adopted in the state. The following pages contain the source of these definitions, the definitions, and the state department contacted.

# Arkansas

**At-risk**

*Youth At-Risk Programs in Arkansas 1990-91 Directory*. Little Rock Arkansas: Arkansas State Department of Education.

"At-risk children are those enrolled in school or eligible for enrollment whose progress toward graduation, school achievement, preparation for employment, and futures as productive workers and citizens are jeopardized by a variety of health, social, educational, familial, and economic factors. They are the children with special needs who are underserved, categorized, ignored, unchallenged, and for whom expectations are low." (p. 3)

**Dropout**

*Youth At-Risk Programs in Arkansas 1990-91 Directory*. Little Rock Arkansas: Arkansas State Department of Education.

"Any pupil who leaves school for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies, without transferring to another school." (p.3)

**State Contact**

Youth At-Risk Coordinator
Arkansas State Department of Education
501/682-4353

# Louisiana

**At-risk**

Louisiana Department of Education. (1990). As mandated by Senate Bill No. 691.

"Students at-risk are those who are experiencing difficulty with learning, school achievement, progress through graduation from high school, and/or preparation for employment due to social, emotional, physical and mental factors. Students are defined as being at-risk when they are:

1. performing at an inappropriate developmental level: and/or
2. one or more years behind their age group in the number of credits attained; and/or
3. one or more years behind in the basic skills levels in language arts and/or math; AND

when they exhibit one or more of the following:

a. have been retained academically one or more years.
b. have exhibited excessive absenteeism from school.
c. have been adjudicated as delinquents
d. have achieved less than a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent,
e. are pregnant and/or are parents,
f. come from low socioeconomic level.

**Factors to Consider for Identification of At-risk Students**

| Risk Factors | Source of Data |
|---|---|
| 1. Have been retained academically one or more years. | Students that have not been promoted one or more times based on the policies and standards for elementary and secondary schools as stated in Bulletin 741 and on academic standards established by the local education agencies in their Pupil Progression Plans. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 2. Have exhibited excessive absenteeism | Students that have five (5) days of consecutive absences is excessive and requires notification of the parent, tutor, or legal guardian. |
| 3. Have been adjudicated as delinquents | As indicated on confidential cumulative records maintained by their school systems or through contact initiated by students behavior, suspensions, expulsions. |

**Dropout**

Louisiana Department of Education. (1990). *Louisiana youth at-risk: A comprehensive direction for the year 2000*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Author.

"An individual who was enrolled in school at some time during the current school year, was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, has not graduated from high school or completed an approved educational program and does not meet any of the following exclusive conditions: transfer to another public school district, private school or state or district-approved education program; temporary absence due to suspension or school-approved illness; or death." (p. 27)

**State Contact**

At-Risk Coordinator
Louisiana State Department of Education
504/342-3407

## New Mexico

**At-risk**

*At-Risk Youth: Continuing the Action, January 1990*, State Department of Education, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

"The State Board of Education's determination of students who are at-risk of school failure are those whose school achievement, progress toward graduation, and/or preparation for employment are in serious jeopardy." (p.2)

**Dropout**

*At-Risk Youth: Continuing the Action, January 1990*, State Department of Education, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

"A dropout is an individual who has not graduated from high school and who leaves or is disenrolled for any reason except transferring to another school or death." (p. 3)

**State Contact**

New Mexico State Department of Education
505/827-6654

# Oklahoma

**At-risk**
SB 583 (signed by the Governor on May 25, 1992: "High challenge children and youth are those at-risk of failure to complete a satisfactory education.")

1991-92 Oklahoma programs in this resource directory defined "at-risk students" according to the definition that appears on the application for state at-risk funds approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education:

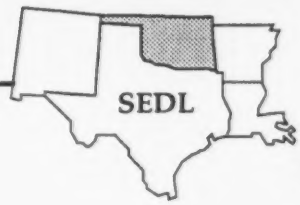
"At-risk children and youth are defined as individuals whose present or predictable status (economic, social-cultural, academic, and/or health) indicates that they might fail to successfully complete their secondary education and acquire basic life skills, including skills necessary for higher education and/or employment. More specifically, children and youth may be deemed at risk if:

1. They are a member of a household or family whose income is at or below the poverty level under criteria used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census; or
2. They have not made substantial progress in mastering skills that are appropriate or students of their age; or
3. They have grades that consistently indicate major underachievement, or
4. They have been retained in a grade for one or more years; or
5. They have been a school dropout or have had excessive absences during a school year; or
6. They have been determined to be at-risk based on assessment by school staff familiar with the students' health, social, or family status as these influences may be impairing the students' success in school. Influences may include, but are not limited to, evidence of abuse of the students, the students' use of alcohol or drugs, pregnancy, or parenthood, delinquent behavior, or attempted suicide."

**Dropout**
70 O.S. SUPP. 1978 § 35E.

"Any student who is under the age of eighteen and has not graduated from high school and is not attending any public or private school or is otherwise receiving an education pursuant to law for the full term the schools of the school district in which he (she) resides are in session."

Beginning with the 90-91 school year, H.B. 1017 revises compulsory school-age requirements to 5-18 years of age. A child may still leave school at age 16 with parental and school permission.




For reporting purposes, a dropout is an individual who:

1. Was enrolled at the end of the last school year and has not enrolled this school year,
2. Was enrolled in school at some time during this school years,
3. Has not graduated from high school, and
4. Does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
   - transfer to another public school district or private school.
   - temporary absence due to suspension or school-approved illness, or
   - death.

**State Contact**
Oklahoma State Department of Education
405/521-3549

# Texas

**At-risk**
19 TAC §75.195, Alternatives to Social Promotion as amended by the SBOE in July, 1990.

Criteria differ for student grade levels:

Grade 1-6: A student in Grades 1 through 6 is defined as at-risk if the student was retained (not promoted) in a grade level at least once in Grades 1 through 6.

Grades prekindergarten through 6: A student in Grades prekindergarten through six is defined as at-risk if the student: (a) did not perform satisfactorily on a beginning of school readiness or achievement test; b) failed at least one reading, writing, or mathematics section of the most recent third through sixth grade TEAMS/TAAS test; c) is a student of limited English proficiency (LEP); d) has been a victim of abuse, as confirmed by the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS); OR, e) engages in delinquent conduct as described by the Texas Family Code, §51.03.

Grades 7 through 12: A student in Grades 7 through 12 is defined as at-risk if the student: 1) was retained (not promoted) at least once in grades 1 through 6 and is still unable to master the essential elements in the seventh grade or higher; 2) is at least two years below grade level in reading or mathematics; 3) failed at least two courses and is not expected to graduate within four years of ninth grade entrance, OR, failed at least one reading, writing, or mathematics section of the most recent seventh through twelfth grade TEAMS/TAAS test.

All grades, (Prekindergarten through 12): each homeless student and each nonhandicapped student who resides in a residential placement facility outside the district of parent/guardian residence is identified as at-risk.

In addition to these criteria, the districts may consider the environmental, familial, economic, social, developmental, and other psycho-social factors in determining services where such factors contribute to the student's inability to progress academically.

**Dropouts**
Texas Education Agency, (1991). *A study of the educational reform on at-risk students in Texas. (Preliminary findings)* Austin, TX: Author.

"Students are counted as dropouts if they are absent for a period of 30 or more consecutive days and no transcripts are requested from another school, school district, or institution."

**State Contact**
Texas Education Agency
512/475-3527